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Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

VOLUME 3
ISSUE 7

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Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine Issue 31 (April 2000)

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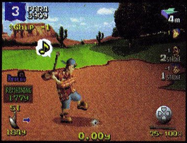
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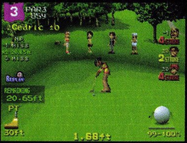
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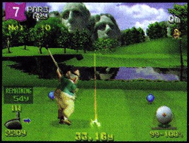
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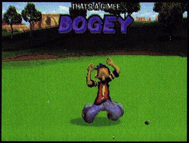
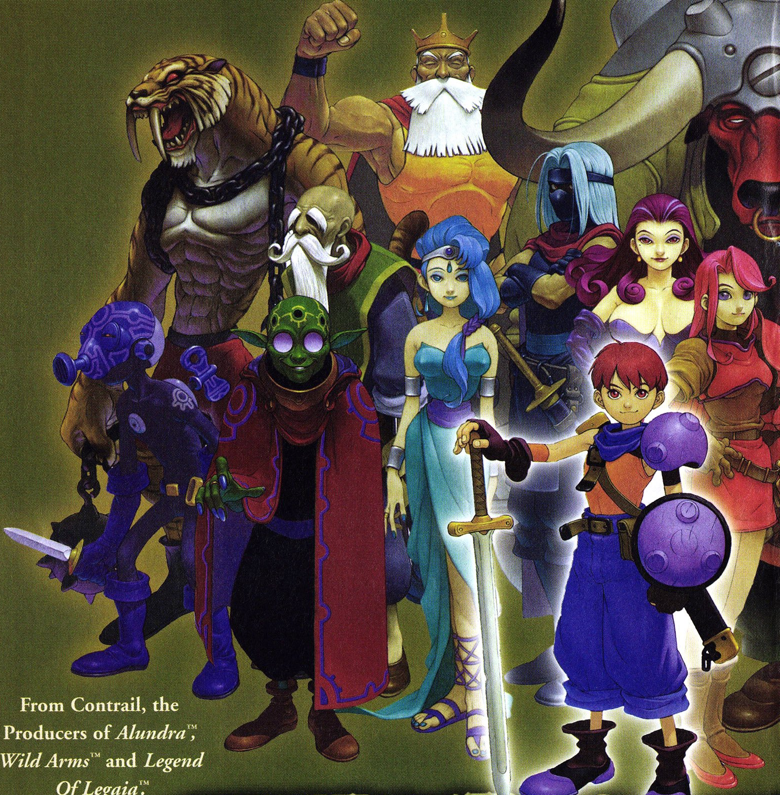
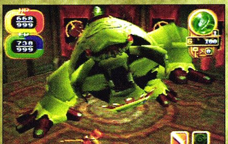

THAT'S A GIMEE
BOGEY

HOT SHOTS GOLF 2

GOLF FOR THE PEOPLE.


From Contrail, the Producers of *Alundra*™, *Wild Arms*™ and *Legend Of Legaia*™.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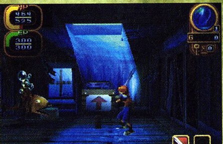
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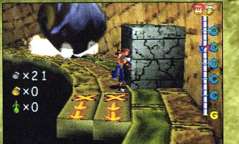

Unlock 10 mini-games to test your skill and increase your stats.

PlayStation

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB
Mild Animated Violence

contrail

Matrix
software

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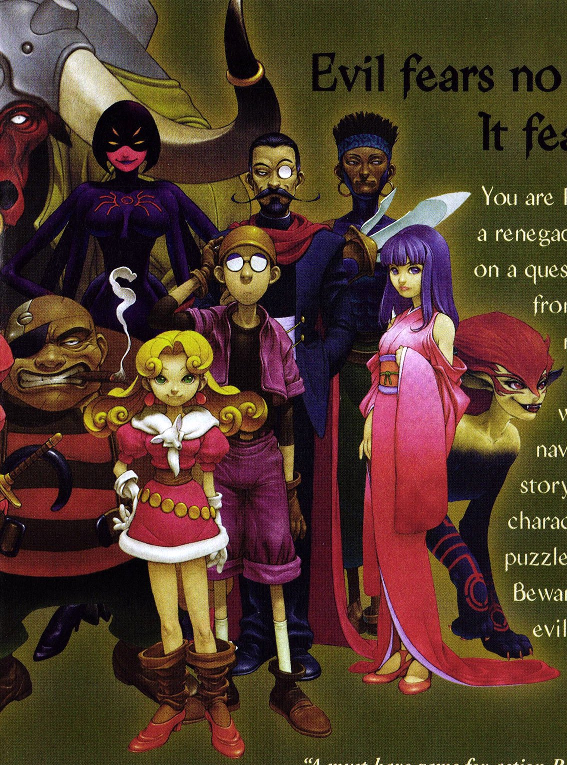

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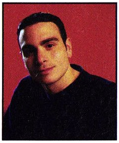
Editorial

A few unofficial words from the official editor-in-chief



When Kraig gets home he plans on playing lots of light gun games so that he can see if it will spur him to commit acts of violence.

Light Guns Taking Fire in Blame Game

Ever since the most recent furor over videogames (what is it, semi-annual now?), game companies have begun scaling back some of their violent games in the most absurd ways, whether it be removing a few drops of blood here or there or the most heinous offense—ultimately removing entire features in a feeble attempt to avoid any sort of public relations problem.

The light gun genre has immediately taken the brunt of the storm. Not only are companies downplaying light gun support in games that have it (Die Hard Trilogy 2 almost whispers it by just showing only a Light Gun Compatible icon on the back of the box), some publishers like Capcom are seriously considering entirely reworking games to completely remove light gun support. And it isn't just with a small token title or two, it's with big-name franchise game additions like Biohazard (Resident Evil): Gun Survivor (as it's named in Japan).

Aside from the fact that this is beginning to destroy a long-time genre, the fact of the matter is that political activist groups are always going to find the game that suits their scapegoating needs, whether it makes sense or not. They're still bashing Doom for goodness sake! Don't get me wrong, I don't have a problem with establishing a good videogames rating system (it's getting there) and then playing within those rules, but when companies actually consider major alterations to games so that they may be deemed less "offensive," there's something really wrong. Not to mention that it also inadvertently lends credibility to some of the outrageous claims being made about video game violence.

Mission Statement

The Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine is the only Sony Computer Entertainment America-licensed magazine and is published by ZD Inc. through an exclusive arrangement. As such, *OPM* remains independent from SCEA, and is a critical, autonomous voice that helps readers get more out of their PlayStation system by delivering the most current, comprehensive and candid coverage of PlayStation software and hardware.

It is often said that in the public eye, the appearance of impropriety is just as bad as the act of impropriety itself. In fact, it was mentioned a lot by political pundits in the Lewinsky case that even if Clinton didn't do anything wrong, it sure as hell looked like he did based on his reactions (sorry to have to bring that up). And similarly, although the games industry isn't responsible for the acts of violence being blamed on it, their knee-jerk, inconsistent reactions are beginning to make them look guilty nevertheless. After all, if they really weren't guilty, they wouldn't be changing their tune, right?

The simple fact is that it's up to the consumers to censor themselves and their kids. There's a rating system in place and, like movies or anything else, if you choose to ignore it, that's your fault. The game industry needs to stop censoring itself with stupid token concessions in their games and refuse to take credit for the actions of the psychotic few. While I can understand removing a little gore to achieve a less restrictive rating is a acceptable thing to do, it's not helping consumers one bit by having features but not talking about them, or just yanking them out altogether. I recently was the guest of a radio talk show in New Orleans, and only one of about 20 calls that I answered thought that games were to blame for recent violence. Consumers aren't stupid, they in large don't blame videogames for their problems. So it's time game companies realize they shouldn't either.

Kraig Kujawa
Editor-in-Chief

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

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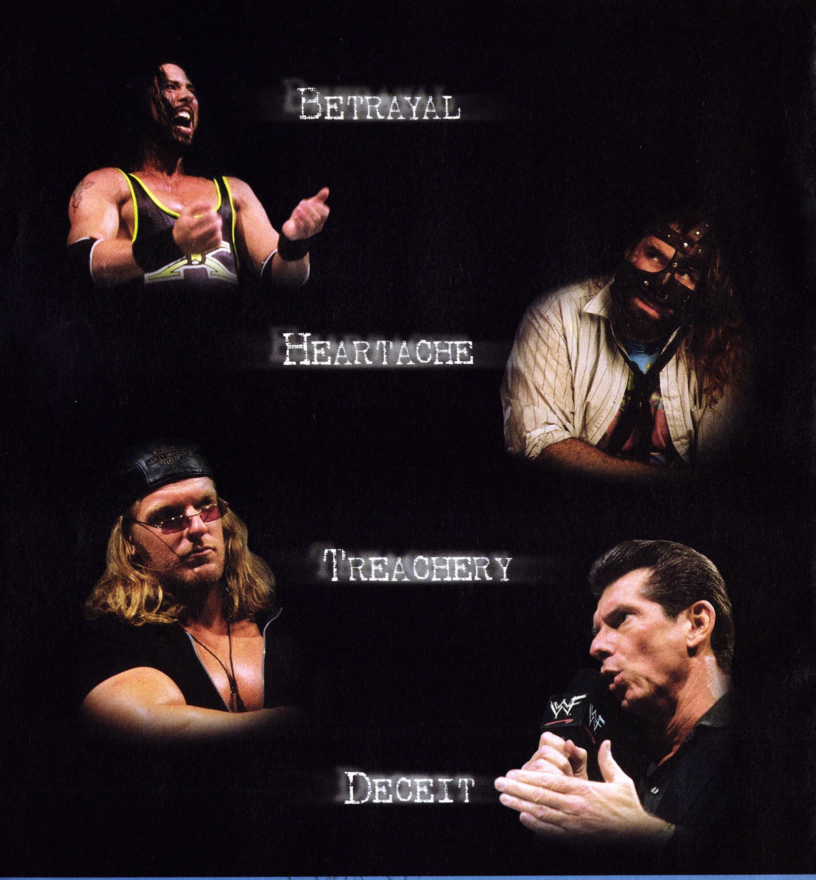
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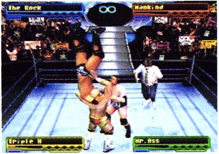
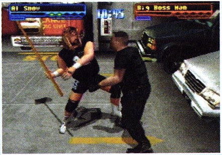
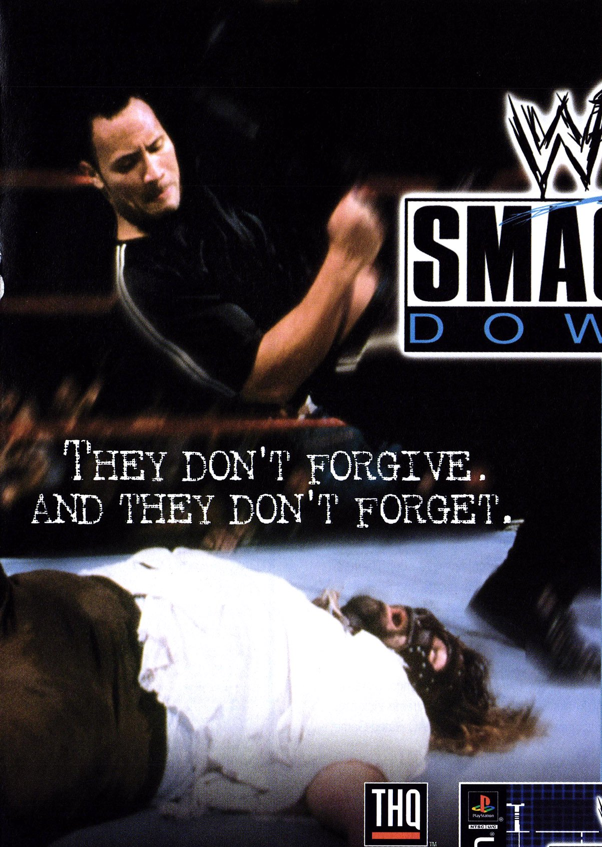

The Rock
Mankind
Triple H
Mr.Ass

4-Player Action


Al Snow
Big Boss Man

Huge Backstage Area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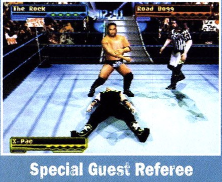
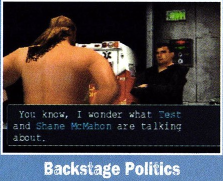
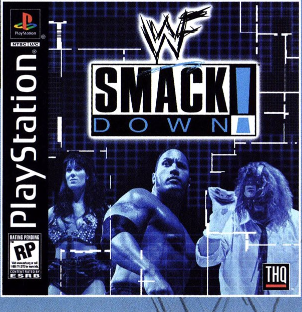

The Rock
Road Dogg
X-Pac

Special Guest Referee


You know, I wonder what Test and Shane McMahon are talking about.

Backstage Politics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ESRB Rating System

EARLY CHILDHOOD ® eC CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

EARLY CHILDHOOD RATING: Deemed Suitable For Children 3 Or Older. Products Carrying This Label Have Absolutely No Material That Would Be Considered Inappropriate By Parents.

EVERYONE ® E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

EVERYONE RATING: The E Replaced The Previous K-A Rating Last Year. Suitable For Kids Ages 6 And Up, E-Rated Games May Contain Minimal Violence Or Crude Language.

TEEN ® T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

TEEN RATING: Contains Suggestive Themes, Mild Or Strong Language And Animated Violence. Some Parents May Want To Supervise Children Playing T-Rated Games.

MATURE ® M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

MATURE RATING: These Games Contain More Adult Themes, Such As Blood And Gore, Stronger Language And Sexual Themes. Deemed Not Suitable For Those Under 17.

ADULTS ONLY ® AO CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

ADULTS ONLY RATING: The Extreme Of The Ratings, Suitable For Adults Only. Packs Sexual Themes And Extreme Violence. Console Manufacturers Have Yet To Allow An AO-Rated Game.

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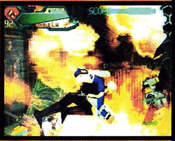
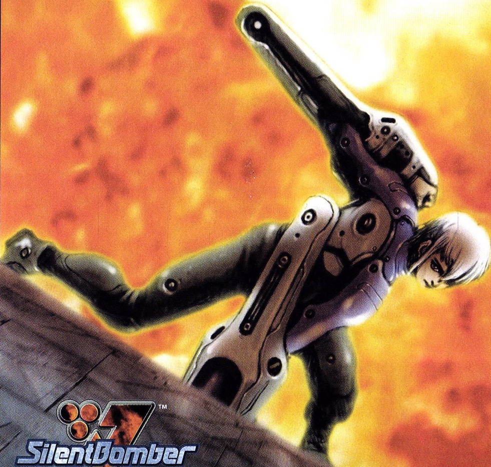
88
SCORE 5380
SHIELD 100%

93
Lv. 6
SCORE 13220
TARGET 02/11
TARGET

NAPALM BOMBS. GRAVITY BOMBS. PARALYZER BOMBS. FIRE BOMBS. THIS GAME REALLY BLOWS.





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PlayStation

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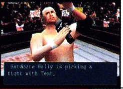
WWF SmackDown!



Does the long-awaited wrestling game live up to its considerable potential, or do we have to lay the smack down on THQ? Find out in our review.

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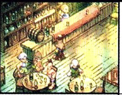
SaGa Frontier 2

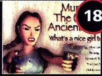


Learn how the different game events in this varied and complex RPG affect each other, and find the quickest, most direct route to the end in this comprehensive strategy.

100

Letters

Why is Lara Croft grimacing in pain in this picture? And when are voice-overs detrimental to your enjoyment of a game? Find out in this month's Letters, where our readers sound off.



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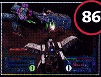

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Tricks

Learn how to access *all* the cheats in Tony Hawk's Pro Skater, open up the original game in Pong, access a ton of secrets in Medal of Honor, and open up new racers in CTR!

SELECT PLAY
OFFICER DICK

110

g.e.a.r.

Double your pleasure with this month's g.e.a.r., featuring an integrated two-person dual arcade stick, a new racing wheel, and one of the most outrageous control pads yet.

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Demo Disc

Is your Spider-Sense tingling? This month's disc features the eagerly anticipated Spider-Man, as well as Colony Wars: Red Sun and the always entertaining Hot Shots Golf 2.

116

COLIN McRAE RALLY™

MoviStar
REPSOL
MoviStar by

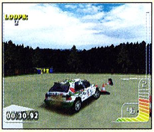
TAKE ON THE BEST.

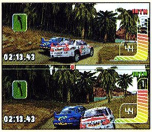
Far beyond the cushy confines of asphalt, a select breed of driver is pushing the limits of man, machine and sanity. The rally racer. Equipped with his trusty co-driver and war horse of a race car, he'll have to suck it up for up to four days of murderous driving in the most inhospitable reaches of the earth. Why not join in on the fun? Colin McRae Rally.™ Slap on a clean pair of skivvies and give thanks for the roll bar. You're about to face the most

Corsica – Even on this idyllic island, the ridiculously narrow, winding roads make it impossible to relax.

FOUR HOURS OF SCORCHING HEAT AND BLIND TURNS WEREN'T A

hair-raising form of racing since the invention of the wheel. For starters, you've got 11 world-class rally cars to run ragged. The Subaru Impreza WRC, Audi Quattro, Mitsubishi Lancer E4 and Seat Ibiza Kit Car Evo2, just to name a few. Their performance and handling specs come straight from the manufacturers. Tire type, steering sensitivity and suspension are all yours for the customizing. Damn, it's good to be a man. So, where do you plan on going with all that horsepower? Rally across eight different countries. From the frozen mountaintops of Monte Carlo to the winding coastal cliffs of Corsica. The dark jungles of Indonesia to the bone-jarring back roads of Greece. And





Greece – The cradle of Western civilization. Home of some really crappy gravel roads.

England – Bloody lousy driving conditions. Muddy, sloppy and devoid of traction.

Sweden – The mother lode of treacherous, icy roads. And we use the term "roads" very loosely.

THINGS TO AVOID: 🚑 🚓 🐕

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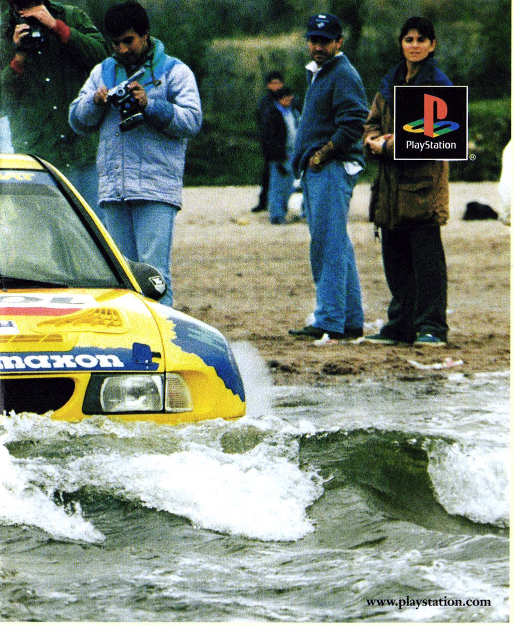
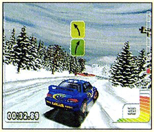


www.playstation.com

Colin McRae, the Flying Scotsman. World Rally Champion. Two-time British Rally Champion. Youngest champion in the history of the sport. Blatantly disregards "Road Closed" signs.



Time Trial stages. (Good luck, mate.) Each stage is tougher than the next. Got an equally masochistic buddy? Go head-to-head in the 2-player Super Special Stage Rallies.

By now, it's pretty obvious. You're gonna need all the help you can get. Luckily, you've got Nicky Grist, Colin McRae's real-life co-driver, feeding you directions as you navigate every high-speed turn. Relax, rookie, there's also

Monaco – Mecca of high-stakes gambling. Equally dicey snow-covered, winding mountain roads.

PROBLEM. THAT SOGGY UNDERWEAR FEELING, NOW THAT WAS A PROBLEM

from the dusty plains of the Australian Outback to the slippery mud bogs of the U.K. But this is no vacation. Each track is riddled with blind turns and surfaces that'll have you double-clutching all the way to the finish line. Strip away almost all visibility and you've got the near-impossible night-driving stages. As if the horrendous driving conditions weren't enough, you'll have to compete against Colin's best times in the

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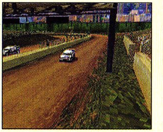

an in-depth Rally School training section taught by the master himself, Colin McRae.

If common sense still hasn't taken over, you may have what it takes to be one of the few, the proud, the extremely uncomfortable.

Indonesia – The dark, wet jungles are enough to send most drivers crying back to their pit crews.

New Zealand – Take on a maze of dusty woodland trails. Reduce the kiwi to roadkill.

Monte Carlo – Hard-packed ice and slippery snow are about to have their way with you.

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

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NEED FOR SPEED
PORSCHE UNLEASHED

Flight 911

For your safety

In preparation for takeoff, securely fasten your racing harness. You are flying in the Porsche® 911® turbo—capable of launching from 0 to 60 in 4.3 seconds and cruising at speeds in excess of 170 mph. Please remember, smoking the tires through 360s and four-wheel drifts is strictly encouraged. We know you have a choice when it comes to your adrenaline needs—thank you for choosing Need for Speed.

Sicherheitshinweise

Vor dem Start die Sicherheitsgurte fest anlegen. Du fliegst im Porsche 911 Turbo.

Mesures De Sécurité

Veillez à bien attacher vos ceintures en vue du démarrage imminent. Vous vous trouvez à bord de la Porsche 911 turbo.

安全のために

離陸時には、必ずシートベルトをしっかりと締めてください。
現在、ポルシェ911ターボで飛行中です。

also available on PC CD
ELECTRONIC ARTS
www.needforspeed.com

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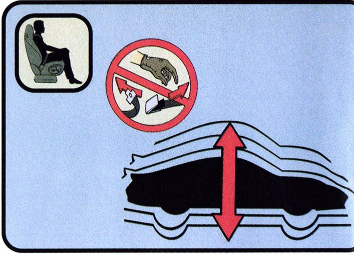
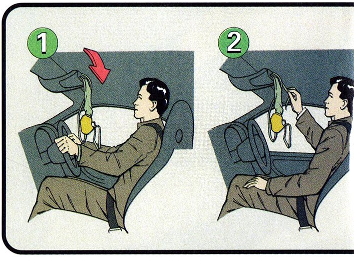
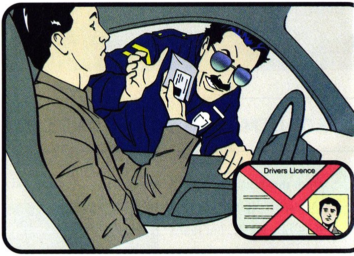
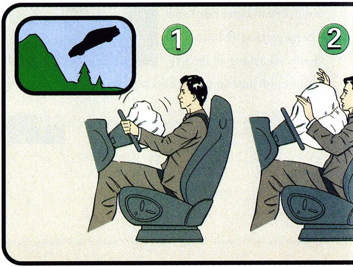
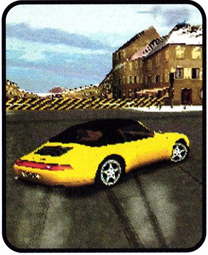
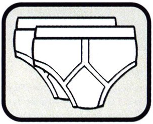


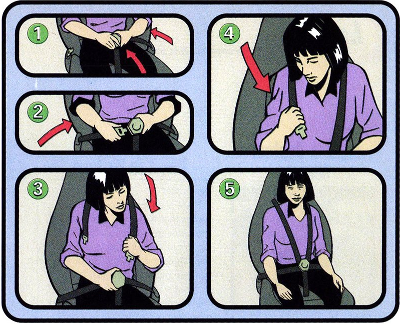


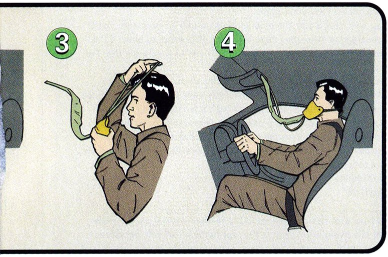


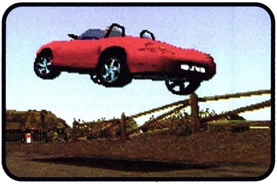


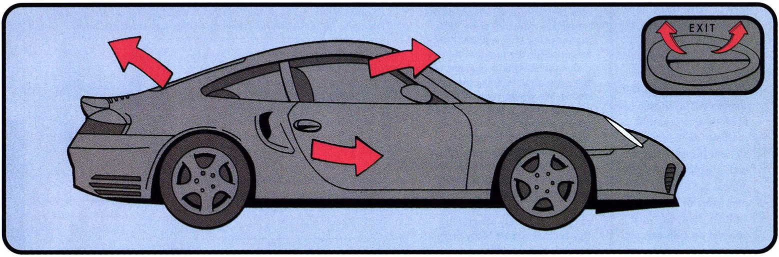


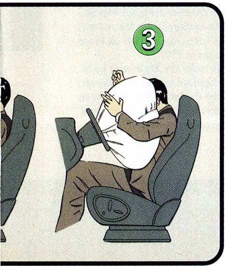


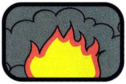






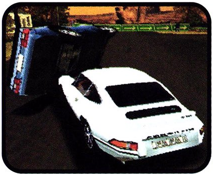


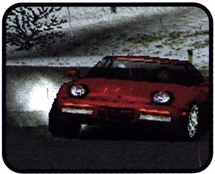


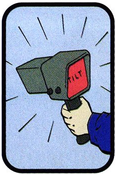


EXIT OPERATION:

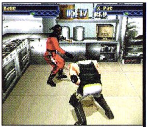
OBSERVE SURROUNDINGS. IF SCENERY IS MOVING–REMAIN IN VEHICLE. IF STATIONARY, PROCEED WITH CAUTION TO NEAREST EXIT.





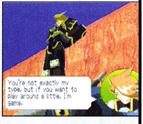


Caption Contest Winner



"Gosh, Kane, why did you put this jelly lid on so tight in the first place?!"
Alex Thompson
Charleston, WV

Now you too can have your shot at history with the OPM Caption Contest! Every month, we run a game-related picture or screenshot. Your job is to write a humorous caption for it and submit it to us at any of the addresses on the following Letters page. The winner will be chosen by the following scientific method: We'll read them all, and the one that makes us laugh our asses off will get a sparkling new game or game-related item. Now, see what you can do with this pic:


You're not exactly my type, but if you want to play around a little, I'm game.

[You didn't really think those were the official rules, did you? For all the legal stuff on this and our other contests, please refer to page 20.]

Put it in Writing!

Dear *OPM*,

There is a recent trend in video games that is really starting to bug me: video game companies choosing to put speech instead of text in their video games. Well, what about hearing-impaired people?! I have suffered a severe hearing impairment since birth. Now I am finding more and more often that I cannot play many video games because there is no form of captioning or text in the games. The most recent examples are Dino Crisis and Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver. I wrote this letter in hopes that some of these companies would see it, and start providing some way for hearing-impaired people to play games. Thanks.

Zach Soule
via the Internet

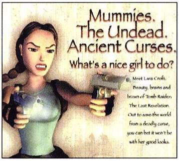
It seems that many game companies are so excited about being able to put voice into their games (especially now that some RPGs are including it as well) that they forget about the fact that they're making it hard for a segment of the population to enjoy the experience. We would suggest that you also write to the game companies themselves and suggest that they at least include the option of captioning—or perhaps it's even possible to encode the games with a true CC signal that your TV can detect and translate! In any event, letters from customers specifically affected by this problem would likely carry a great deal of weight.

Broken Thumbs

Dear *OPM*,

Say, did you notice the way Lara Croft is holding her Desert Eagle in the big Eidos ads for The Last Revelation? You'd think a toughie like Ms. Croft would know what would happen if you held your thumb on the back of the slide of a .50 magnum! When you fire one of those things, the slide comes back at about 250mph, and it weighs about a pound... OW! Kids, don't try this at home!

Marcus J. Ranum
via the internet


Mummies.
The Undead.
Ancient Curses.
What's a nice girl to do?
Meet Lara Croft.
Beauty, brains and
brawn of Tomb Raider,
The Last Revelation.
Out to save the world
from a deadly curse,
you can bet it won't be
with her good looks.

Whoops! It's amazing the old girl has survived this long with that careless attitude! Maybe broken thumbs are the reason she keeps slipping off all those ledges in TR4!

It looks like Eidos may have recognized the error, however, since the latest ads we've seen show her hands in a much less dangerous position.

Letter of the Month

Dear OPM,

I was flipping through your December issue when I noticed an ad for 3Dfx (yes, I know that a reader has already complained about these ads). This one suggests that console gamers have never "actually seen breasts." Well, ever since I hit puberty I've been seeing breasts: my own. But 3Dfx thinks girls don't game.

Okay, well, that's just the opinion of one dumb ad executive, right? Oops, make that two—no, three ad execs: 3DO wants to know if I'm "feeling lucky" and Electronics Boutique wants to assure me that I'm "gonna score."

Is it any wonder that girls make up a tiny share of the gaming market? These products are not innocently aimed at boys; they're not just turning women into objects (although it is interesting that the PlayStation and its games are posited as alternatives to women more than once)—they are shutting out any possibility of a female user.

How does the world of electronic gaming benefit from limiting their market to less than half the population?

Louise Siddons
Stanford, CA

It's true that the gaming industry focuses mostly on the male half of the population (and we're not innocent of this ourselves) because, until recently, the overwhelming majority of gamers (not to mention game mag editors!) has been male. This is changing steadily, however, as gaming reaches a wider audience, and we can expect to see advertisers waking up to this fact sooner or later.

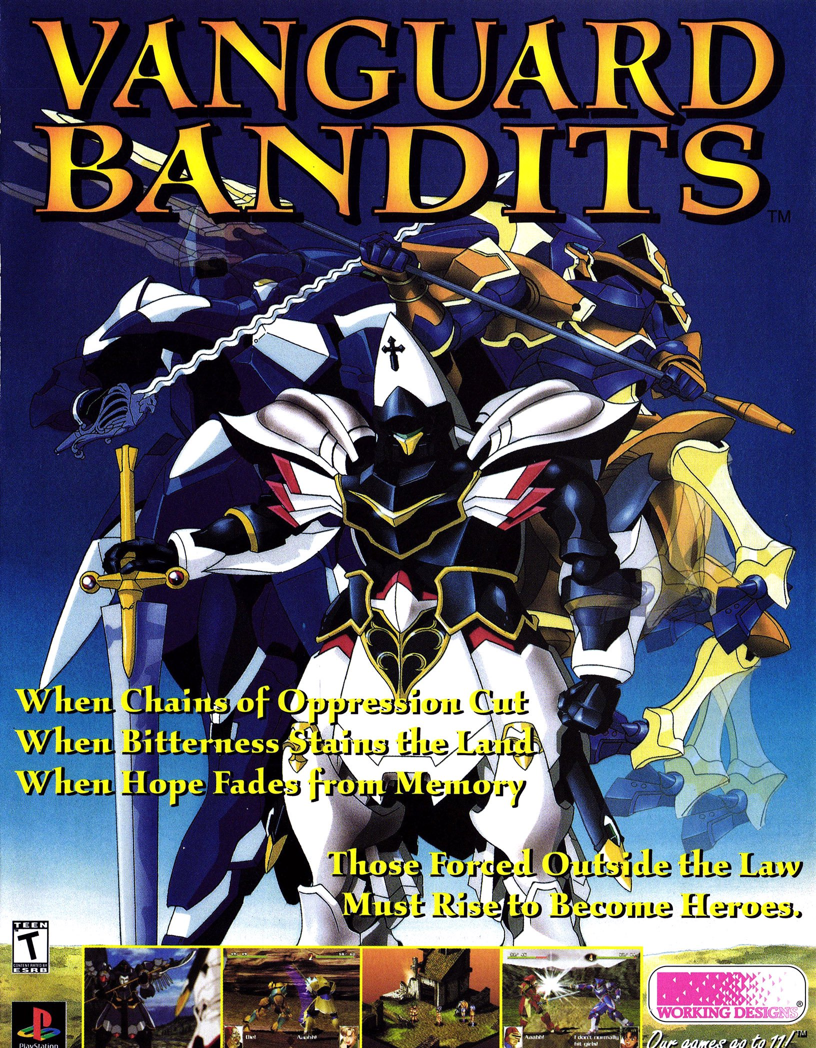
Do you think you have what it takes to write the Letter of the Month? Send us your timely, original, well-written video game expositions (you don't even have to agree with us!) and you too could win an official OPM BOX OF JOY. New surprise goodies every month!

we want your input!

How do you like the mag? What about the design? Are we leaving anything out?

Let us know!

To get special attention as far as design and content issues go, label your letters or e-mails with the heading: PlayStation Magazine suggestions c/o the Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine at the addresses on the final Letters page.
We can't wait to hear from you.


VANGUARD BANDITS™
When Chains of Oppression Cut
When Bitterness Stains the Land
When Hope Fades from Memory
Those Forced Outside the Law
Must Rise to Become Heroes.
TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB
PlayStation
Die!
Aaahh!
Aaahh!
I don't normally hit girls!
WORKING DESIGNS®
Our games go to 11!™

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Letters

A glimpse into the demented minds of our readers

Did you buy a copy of our magazine that did not contain a demo CD? Simply send the receipt in an envelope marked "OPM Replacement Disc" to the address below with the name and address of the store plus your phone number and address and we'll send you the disc. Make sure you specify which month the corresponding disc belongs to in order to ensure you get the right one.

Also, if you have a malfunctioning or non-working demo disc, call SCEA at 1-800-345-SONY. They will provide instructions to obtain repair or replacement services. For more information see this month's Demo Disc section.

Spinning Symbol

Dear *OPM*,

When I looked at the pictures of the PlayStation2 in your magazine and many other game mags, I noticed something strange. If you take a picture of the PS2 and turn it on its side the PlayStation symbol is sideways. But in the pictures of the PS2 standing on end the symbol is upright. Does the new system have some kind of floating symbol?

Derrie Ward
via the Internet

That's basically it: The symbol is on a small post allowing it to be rotated to the proper configuration depending on how the system is positioned. With the stark design and the availability of the lovely blue stands, it appears Sony has gone to great lengths to make the PS2 look sharp.

Um...

Dear *OPM*,

You guys are so biased. I never see you review a Nintendo or Sega game. You should be ashamed.

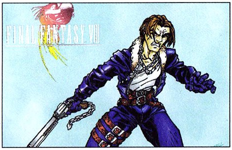
Tyler Bartel
via the Internet

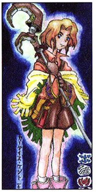
We really, truly hope this is a joke. Please tell us it's a joke. Pretty please?

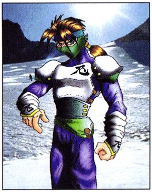
DO YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS ABOUT YOUR SUBSCRIPTION TO *OPM*? POINT YOUR BROWSER TO http://subscribe.playstationmagazine.com/service AND FILL OUT THE APPROPRIATE FORM. WITH A CREDIT CARD, YOU CAN EVEN START A NEW SUBSCRIPTION!

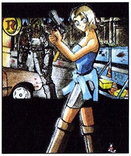
The Reader Art Challenge

Every month we'll be picking one exceptional piece as our Reader Art of the Month. The winner will have his/her piece published and will receive a new game or game-related item in the mail—so include your mailing address with all submissions. And remember, we accept all formats (ink, pencil, computer generated, etc.) by e-mail and snail mail. So get crackin'!









Check out this month's artists! Far left: Curtis Kent, San Leandro, CA; center left: our winner, Timothy Lim, Little Rock, AR; left: Jonathan Robison, Baltimore, MD; and above: Kristoffer R. Remmell, Erlanger, KY.

3 ways to reach us

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630 382 9010

e-mail:
opm@zd.com
and check us out on
www.videogames.com

Official Contest and Sweepstakes Rules

TOP 10 MOST WANTED SWEEPSTAKES
Official Contest Rules:

1. No Purchase Necessary: To enter, send a letter or standard-sized postcard containing your name, address and phone number together with your list of 10 most wanted video games to "Top Ten Most Wanted" Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine, P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338 or e-mail it to gary_steinman@zd.com or fax it to (630) 382-9010. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. One entry per household per month. Entries must be received by the 10th day of the month for the next available issue of OPM. All entries become exclusive property of Ziff-Davis and will not be acknowledged or returned. Ziff-Davis assumes no responsibility for lost, mutilated, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due or misdirected entries. Sponsors reserve the right to cancel this contest at any time with appropriate notice. Only one prize per family, organization or household per month. 2. Prizes: One Grand Prize winner will receive two (2) video games as determined by Namco. Grand Prize has an approximate retail value of $80. Winners shall be determined by a random drawing of all valid entries by OPM editors, whose decisions are final. All prize winners will be notified by mail. Prize(s) are non-transferable. No substitutions of prize(s) are allowed, except at the option of Sponsor should the featured prizes become unavailable. 3. Odds of Winning: The number of winners and the odds of winning will be determined by number of valid entries received. 4. Eligibility: Contest open to residents of United States and Canada. Void in Quebec. Non-compliance with the time parameters contained herein or return of any prize/prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification. Winners or their legal guardians shall sign an affidavit of eligibility/release of liability/prize acceptance within 5 days of receipt or forfeit prize. By acceptance of prize, winner(s) agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for purposes of advertising, trade or promotion without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. Neither ZD Inc., Namco nor their respective affiliates, subsidiaries, divisions or related companies are responsible or liable for any damages, taxes or expenses that consumers might incur as a result of this contest or receipt of prize. 5. Winners List: For a list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope identifying the month for which the winners list is requested to OPM Top 10 Most Wanted Winners List, P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338. Allow 4 weeks for delivery of winners list. 6. Restrictions: Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply.

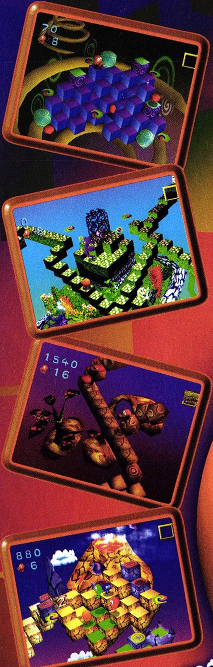
OPM CAPTION CONTEST
Official Contest Rules:

1. No Purchase Necessary: To enter, send an original caption for the attached screen shot on a standard-sized postcard containing your name, address, and phone number to "OPM Caption Sweepstakes" PO Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. All entries must be handwritten. Mechanically reproduced entries will not be accepted. Entries must be received by the 10th day of the month for the next available issue of OPM. All entries become exclusive property of ZD Inc. and will not be acknowledged or returned. Ziff-Davis assumes no responsibility for lost, mutilated, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due or misdirected entries. 2. Prizes: One Grand Prize winner will receive one (1) video game or one (1) video game-related item as determined by ZD. Grand Prize has an approximate retail value of $20-50. All entries will be judged on the following criteria by OPM editors, whose decisions are final: (50%) originality and (50%) creativity. Entries containing obscene language will be disqualified. All prize winners will be notified by mail. Prize(s) are non-transferable. No substitutions of prize(s) are allowed, except at the option of ZD should the featured prizes become unavailable. 3. Odds of Winning: The odds of winning will be determined by number of valid entries received. 4. Eligibility: Contest open to residents of United States and Canada. Void in Quebec. Non-compliance with the time parameters contained herein or return of any prize/prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification. Winners or their legal guardians shall sign an affidavit of eligibility/release of liability/prize acceptance within 5 days of receipt or forfeit prize. By acceptance of prize, winner(s) agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for purposes of advertising, trade or promotion without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. Neither ZD Inc., nor its affiliates, subsidiaries, divisions or related companies are responsible or liable for any damages, taxes or expenses that consumers might incur as a result of this contest or receipt of prize. 5. Winners List: For a list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope identifying the month for which the winners list is requested to "OPM Quote Contest Winners List" at the address listed above. Allow 4 weeks for delivery of winners list. 6. Restrictions: Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply.

OPM LETTER OF THE MONTH
Official Contest Rules:

1. No Purchase Necessary: To enter, send a letter or standard-size postcard containing your name, address, and phone number together with your comments to "OPM Letter of the Month", PO Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338. No purchase or payment of any money is necessary to enter. One entry per household. All entries must be handwritten. Mechanically reproduced entries will not be accepted. Entries must be received by the 10th day of the month for the next available issue of *OPM*. All entries become exclusive property of ZD Inc. and will not be acknowledged or returned. Ziff-Davis assumes no responsibility for lost, mutilated, late, illegible, incomplete, postage-due or misdirected entries. 2. Prizes: One Grand Prize winner will receive a box containing various items from the *OPM* offices. Grand Prize has an approximate retail value of at least $10. Winners will be selected by a judging panel whose decisions are final. Winners shall be selected from all valid entries received. All entries will be judged on the following criteria by *OPM* editors, whose decisions are final: (50%) originality and (50%) creativity. Entries containing obscene language will be disqualified. All prize winners will be notified by mail. Prize(s) are non-transferable. No substitutions of prize(s) are allowed, except at the option of ZD should the featured prizes become unavailable. 3. Odds of Winning: The odds of winning will be determined by number of valid entries received. 4. Eligibility: Contest open to residents of United States and Canada. Void in Quebec. Non-compliance with the time parameters contained herein or return of any prize/prize notification as undeliverable will result in disqualification. Winners or their legal guardians shall sign an affidavit of eligibility/release of liability/prize acceptance within 5 days of receipt or forfeit prize. By acceptance of prize, winner(s) agree to the use of their name and/or likeness for purposes of advertising, trade or promotion without further compensation, unless prohibited by law. Neither ZD Inc., nor its affiliates, subsidiaries, divisions or related companies are responsible or liable for any damages, taxes or expenses that consumers might incur as a result of this contest or receipt of prize. 5. Winners List: For a list of winners, send a stamped, self-addressed envelope identifying the month for which the winners list is requested to "OPM Letter of the Month Winners List" at the address listed above. Allow 4 weeks for delivery of winners list. 6. Restrictions: Void where prohibited or restricted by law. All federal, state and local regulations apply.

Alien? Aardvark? Mutant platypus?



Okay... we admit it. We don't know what the @!#?*! he is either...but we do know he rocks!

Puzzle Game of the Year
An awesome update of the original
–EGM

9 out of 10–challenging, addictive & fun
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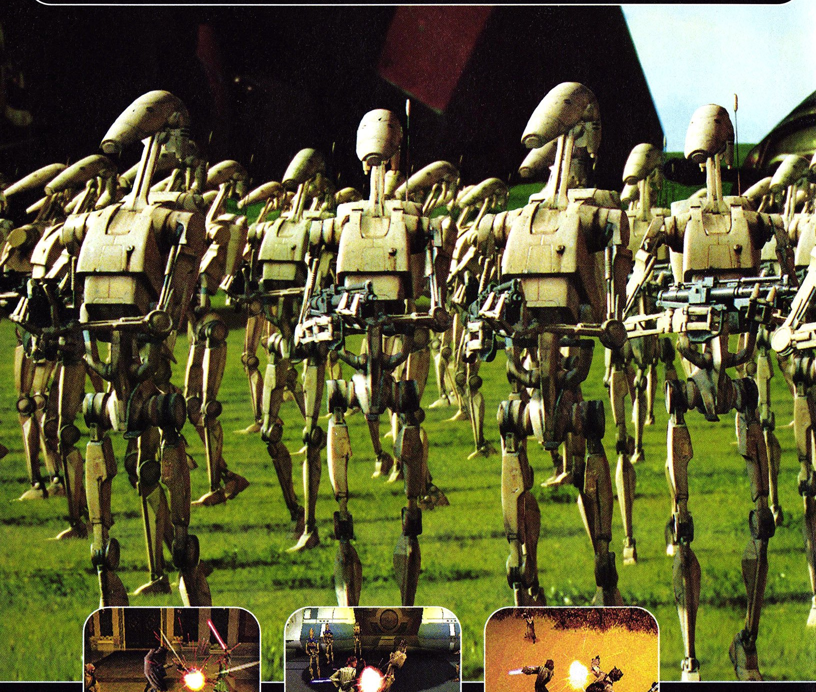
DESTROY ALL YOU WANT. WE'LL MAKE MORE.



Tread not where you are unwanted. Or pay the ultimate price. If sheer numbers are not your opponents of unfathomable strength surely will be.

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Animated Violence

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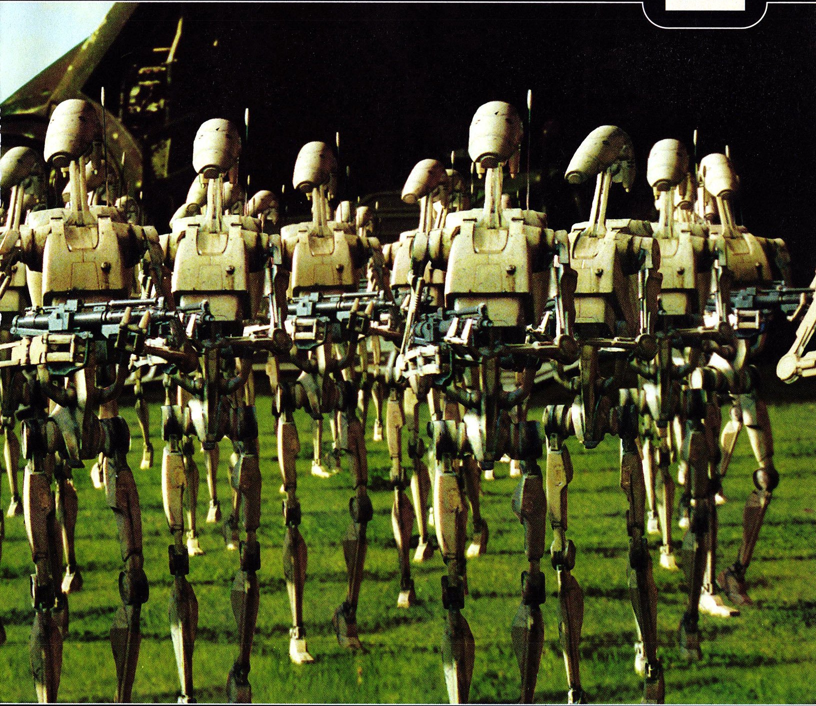

downfall, alien creatures and mysterious

But, wise Jedi, the choice is yours. Enter at your own risk.

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Final Fantas

What does Square do when they're ready to announce the next Final Fantasy games? They throw a big party called Square Millennium and invite 10,000 gamers to join in the festivities. On Jan. 27 at the Pacifico Yokohama in Yokohama, Japan, Square announced not one, not two, but three new Final Fantasy games, unveiled a new online service, and even let lucky gamers playtest their first PS2 software.

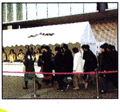
Square's Online Fantasy a Reality

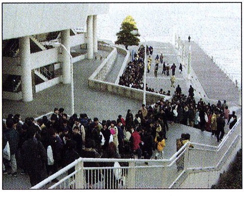
At the hub of Square's future plans is PlayOnline, a joint venture between Square and Japanese telecommunications company NTT Communications. It's not just another online portal, but instead will provide a range of services from gaming to online shopping.

At the Millennium event Square showed a short video depicting its vision for its online world in 2001. Three gamers living everyday lives—two at home (and tightly tethered to their PS2s) and one at a remote terminal in an arcade—chatted online and decided on a time when they'd all be able to play some Final Fantasy XI. In the meantime, one read online manga (comics), another listened to downloadable music and the third returned from his errands. All this led up to the trio getting ready to attack a dungeon in FFXI, with the help of an online strategy guide.

Square showed off various demonstrations of how PlayOnline's various services will work. Users will have schedules that can be shared and written to by selected friends/colleagues. If you're off doing something else on the service, your designated friends will be able to see what kind of service you're currently viewing. Subscribers can read online manga or download the latest hits via music charts updated in real time. Or if sports is more your thing, you can check scores or even download data for use in games like racing (pit yourself against "ghosts" of drivers from real races) and baseball (update your player stats). PlayOnline will also have Web-browsing capabilities.

Money burning a hole in your pocket? Digicube, Square's distribution service, will no doubt have plenty of things for you to buy in its expanding e-commerce plans. Square commented that soon enough you'll be able to browse through three-dimensional stores just as you would in real life (it'd kinda be hard to try on clothes that way, though—wouldn't it?).





Thousands of fans lined up early to get a sneak peek at Square's latest software.

illustration by Wayne Vincent

sy IX, X, XI

Final Fantasy for the 21st Century

What would a Square Millennium be without some Final Fantasy? Square's got three of 'em for ya—IX, X and XI—all in the span of a little more than a year. Here's how it's all going to go down:

Final Fantasy IX

While FFVII and VIII took a drastic turn away from the graphical styles of previous Final Fantasy games, FFIX brings it back to the old school. Returning to the series are the superdeformed-style characters (designed by Yoshitaka Amano), along with a much more medieval look and feel. Also making a comeback are the old-style wizards last seen in the days of Final Fantasy V. In the trailer we were shown, we see what's presumably the hero of the story, who happens to sport a tail, running from various enemies, climbing a spiraling staircase in a castle, and taking a ride on an airship. Other scenes include the airship traveling toward a vast city; a celebration that looks like it might be a concert of some sort; a huge battle being fought by flying dragons among a hail of what looks like laser beams; and several winged characters including an angel-type woman and a devilish-looking red-skinned character. Battles look very similar to those of VII or VIII, with the usual amount of Guardian Force-type summoning attacks. Final Fantasy IX will be released for the PlayStation in Japan this summer, with a U.S. release rumored to closely follow.

SQUARE
MILLENNIUM
YOKOHAMA

Final Fantasy X

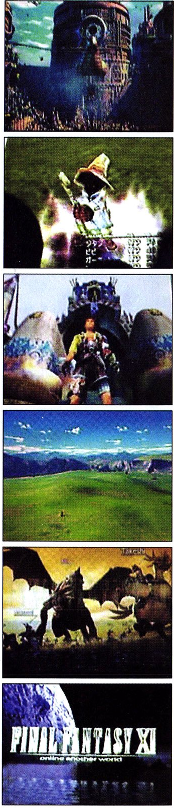
PlayStation2 gets its first taste of Final Fantasy with number 10. What was shown was very early and consisted primarily of the main character running through various real-time environments like a castle and a field. The demo switched over every so often to an online strategy guide attached to Square's PlayOnline; the guide immediately boots up with a screen indicating the player's current position in relation to other areas nearby, and also provides information on what monsters are in the area (handy, eh?). Final Fantasy X is scheduled for a spring 2001 release on PlayStation2 in Japan.

Final Fantasy XI

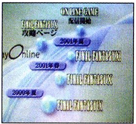
Compared to IX and X, there was little to show on XI, as the game is still in preproduction. What was shown were character sketches (with a character that looks much like a hybrid of Cloud and Squall, and a wizard-type character that looks like the one from IX). FFXI also seems to feature plenty of dragons and a more medieval theme. One of the stills shown was of a city looking much like Mos Eisley from *Star Wars*—only this one seemed to extend higher into the sky. A still shot of a battle scene showed three characters up against a huge winged frog-type creature. Whereas FFX is the first FF to use online features like the strategy guide, XI will be the first online-only Final Fantasy. Square hopes not only to create an online world, but also to populate it with online inhabitants. Additionally, PlayOnline will be dual-language and cross-continental so that players from Japan and the U.S. could potentially trade items and meet online. That would mark the first time such cross-continental play has been available to console gamers. Final Fantasy XI is currently scheduled for release in Japan during the summer of 2001.

Final Fantasy Movie

Square also showed a brief trailer for *Final Fantasy: The Movie*, set for a 2001 opening. But due to heavy contractual obligations, Square insisted that pictures not be taken of the trailer just yet. The movie's official Web site will open in March.



Pics of Final Fantasy IX (top two), X (middle two) and XI (bottom two) appeared online mere hours after the show ended. These pics are just a few of the spy camera shots acquired by fans at the event and posted on the Web.



PlayOnline™

Square's master plan to get everyone using PlayOnline is to make it the service of choice for Final Fantasy players. It'll probably work, too.

UPS AND DOWNS

THQ

It's been too long since everyone's favorite doggy detective graced a console game, but now that THQ has acquired the Scooby-Doo! license we'll finally see him starring in a PlayStation game this fall.

Hasbro Interactive

Yeah, we know NASCAR is big right now, but do we really need a game based on a cartoon featuring a futuristic band of cleverly named kids (like Megan "Spitfire" Fassler—oooh, that's so rad) who use their NASCAR vehicles to perform all kinds of heroics? Hasbro thinks so, and so they snagged the rights to Saban Entertainment's NASCAR Racers. Ugh.

989 Gets Eighty-Sixed

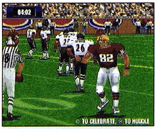
In an effort to consolidate its publishing and development efforts leading up to the U.S. launch of the PlayStation2, Sony Computer Entertainment America will merge 989 Studios with SCEA, effective April 1. Kaz Hirai, SCEA's president, will head up the combined operation, and Shuhei Yoshida (whose efforts include Gran Turismo and Ape Escape) will become vice president of product development. Kelly Flock, 989 Studios' president, will be leaving Sony.

According to an SCEA spokeswoman, the merger won't affect 989 titles already in the pipeline (meaning we'll still see Syphon Filter 2 and MLB 2001). No comment yet, though, on whether Sony plans to create sequels to 989's major franchises on either the PlayStation or the PS2—although series like Syphon Filter and Jet Moto seem like no-brainers for the PS2. SCEA will continue to publish all sports titles under the 989 Sports name.

989 Studios began as an internal development studio within SCEA, and later was spun off into a separate unit of SCEA.

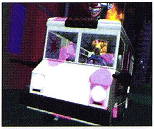
989'S LEGACY

In the past few years, 989 emerged as a developer/publisher of a wide range of games, both in terms of genre and quality. The following are a few highlights:



THE GOOD

From its GameDay series to its FaceOff titles, 989 released some of the best sports games on the PlayStation. 989 also took everyone by surprise last year with the little-hyped but excellent Syphon Filter.



THE BAD

989 managed to rip the heart out of the Twisted Metal series when they took over as developer with Twisted Metal III. Thankfully, they redeemed themselves with a better showing in TM4.

0:40
CROCKETT

THE UGLY

Anything 989 released with "Xtreme" in the title turned out to be extreme crap. Witness the NFL Xtreme series as well as 3Xtreme and its two predecessors.

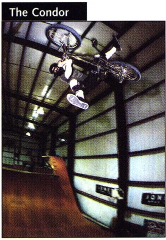
Potent Quotes

"The company hopes to sell 2 million units in the first two days of the launch." –Kiyoshi Yamakawa, corporate adviser to Sony, topping Sony's previous estimate of 1 million PlayStation2 units shipping in the first week of the system's launch

"It's not more blood—it's just better blood." –Dan Kaufman, head of business affairs for Kalisto, commenting on Nightmare Creatures II

"We have not obtained any information regarding the hardware [of Microsoft's X-Box]. We don't think it will be our rival. For instance, I don't think automobile company A and B have to necessarily compete against each other. If Microsoft thinks we are their rival, that would be an honor." –Ken Kutaragi, president of Sony Computer Entertainment

The Condor



BMX champ Matt "Condor" Hoffman will be starring in Activision's Matt Hoffman's Pro BMX, due out this fall. The game will use an enhanced version of Neversoft's Tony Hawk's Pro Skater engine.

PlayStation Games for $9.99!

Sony to lower licensing fees, paving the way for $10 titles

TOMB RAIDER
PlayStation
EIDOS
CRASH BANDICOOT
PlayStation

While some retailers are already offering selected Greatest Hits titles for $10–$15, you can expect to see new games at bargain basement prices pretty soon.

In a bold move that further proves PlayStation gaming has gone mainstream, Sony will cut its licensing fees charged to third-party developers, making it easier for them to offer new games at rock-bottom prices.

According to a recent article in *Games Business*, a video game trade magazine, "Sony's new tiered licensing program will provide incentives for game publishers to publish PlayStation titles at lower price points, making PlayStation games more attractive to the growing casual-gaming market and extending the lifecycle of the $99 console."

Games Business spoke with several industry executives who confirmed Sony's move; moreover, some publishers are planning to release new budget-priced titles, with several saying they're ready to publish games for as little as $10 to $15.

One side result of this will likely be a massive boom in the production of kid games. PlayStation titles may also be offered in new sales channels, like Wal-Mart or even grocery stores, notes *Games Business*.

While Sony wouldn't comment on its licensing plans, a spokeswoman did acknowledge making an announcement to third-party partners regarding its licensing fee structure. "As with any business arrangement, SCEA does not disclose details of proprietary contractual agreements," said the spokeswoman.

More Bang for 10 Bucks

With 70 million PlayStations out there, Sony's got to do something to keep all those gamers happy. The company's move to create a cheaper price point is definitely a step in the right direction. Here are a few thoughts on what we'd like to see for $10. Let us know what you think.

- **Mission Paks/Add-Ons: Why not release a few new tracks for Gran Turismo 2? Or how about a handful of short missions for Lara Croft? Or maybe even midseason roster updates for sports titles. For 10 bucks, these kinds of "bonus" discs could be big sellers.**
- **Yaroze Titles: Remember Sony's development kit for the masses? Sony should release compilations of homemade Yaroze titles from Japan, Europe and the U.S. You never know—there might be some real gems out there.**
- **Legitimate Kid Games: The key word here is legitimate. We'd be proud to pass our PlayStations on to our little brothers if we could be assured that the quality of the new kid games would be up to snuff.**

LAST-MINUTE **UPDATE**

Activision chases new title

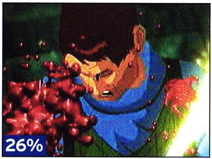
Just as we were going to press, we learned that Activision has snagged the rights to publish Sugar & Rocket's action/adventure Chase the Express here in the U.S. Expect a name change before its release, expected later this year.

ONLINE POLL Thrill Seekers

Resident Evil remains the biggest name in virtual terror for PlayStation gamers. Of the 6,349 respondents to *OPM*'s online poll, a whopping 57% said Capcom's RE Survivor is the thriller they're most looking forward to. Making a strong second-place appearance, though, is Eidos' Fear Effect. Look for hands-on coverage of these games throughout this issue.

57%

Resident Evil Survivor



26%

Fear Effect

7%

Galerians

6%

Nightmare Creatures II

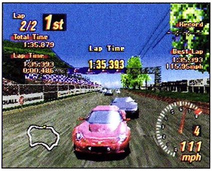
54 Dmg
MEGA ROCK
ARROW SLIT
BEAR TRAP

4%

Deception 3: Dark Delusion

SONY FIXES GT2 BUGS

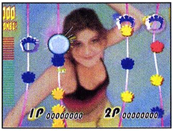
Last month we reported that Gran Turismo 2 shipped incomplete, with one major bug that prevented gamers from completing GT2 with a full 100% rating. Since then, a Sony spokesperson called to tell us the company is aware of the problems and will be fixing them in future copies of the game. "In an attempt to meet and satisfy the extremely high consumer demand, Gran Turismo 2 shipped with a few software bugs that, unfortunately, were not caught during our extensive product evaluation process," Sony told us. "We have made every attempt to rectify this situation by re-mastering the product and are confident that all discs in production are free of these technical problems."



Sony also offered to help gamers identify whether they have a buggy version of GT2, and offered to replace defective copies within five working days. If you have any questions about this matter, you can call Sony at 800-345-7669.

Britney Bounces Onto the PS2

We'll be the first to admit that Jaleco's Stepping Selection is not one of the most noteworthy games for the PlayStation2—but any excuse to run a pic of our favorite teen sensation is good enough for us. Stepping Selection is a dance/rhythm game that uses a special dancing control pad (sold separately) and features the music of Britney Spears, the Backstreet Boys and other musical geniuses. The game is set to release as a PS2 launch title.



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PS2 Software Spotlight

SNK, Bethesda Softworks and Edge of Reality have all committed to developing PlayStation2 games. No specifics yet on any of their titles.... Sony Computer Entertainment's puzzle game Fantavision has been announced as a Japanese launch title. Also confirmed for the Japanese launch is Capcom's Street Fighter EX3.... Tremor Entertainment is working on two PS2 titles: Warcaster, a medieval fantasy game, and Substance, a real-time strategy game that includes flight-sim and shooting elements.... Namco's Tekken Tag Tournament will no longer be a Japanese launch title; the game is now set to release on March 30.... Electronic Arts Square is working on a game called Super Snowboard Cross. Expect it to be the first in about a bazillion snowboarding titles.... Rockstar told us they have seven PS2 titles in development. Two will be developed by Angel Studios and are featured in this month's PS2 Gallery. Bungie Software is also developing a game for Rockstar called Halo, which is rumored to be on its way to the PS2. Other likely titles include a Duke Nukem game and an Austin Powers game.... Midway is planning to release Ready 2 Rumble 2 at the U.S. launch. Other confirmed PS2 titles include a new version of NBA Showtime, Thieves World (which includes Metal Gear-like stealth elements and plenty of looting), Legion (a real-time strategy set in Arthurian times) and Spy Hunter 2.... SCi Entertainment announced it'll be porting two of its forthcoming PC titles, Titanium Angels and Thunderbirds, to the PS2.... Ubi Soft has two Batman titles planned for the PS2, one of which is based on the animated series.... Monolith Soft, a subsidiary of Namco, is developing an RPG for the PS2. Current speculation points to the game being similar to Xenogears.

PS2 Hardware Highlights

DVD Details: Just a few days after rumors began circulating that the PS2 wouldn't function as a full-featured DVD player, Sony held a meeting with the Japanese press to demonstrate the PS2's DVD capabilities. The PS2 will indeed include many standard DVD functions like multi-angle viewing and subtitles. Moreover, the picture quality is on the same level as other top-of-the-line DVD systems. However, you need to use a driver file that comes loaded onto the memory card that ships with the system. (The PS2 also includes a utility disc, in case you accidentally erase the card.)

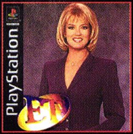
Backward Incompatibility: Sony revealed that some PS games won't work properly on the PS2. Apparently, video images or sounds on certain titles won't translate properly. A Sony official indicated the problem would be limited to older software. Still, this stands in contrast to Sony's prior assertions that all PlayStation software would work on the PS2.

More the Merrier: A new multitap will be available at the PS2 launch. It'll sell for 3600 yen (about $34).

Sensational: Sony has entered into a middleware agreement with Immersion, which will provide its TouchSense technology to help develop touch-sensitive peripherals and other products for the PS2.

10 things we think we think this month

1 Activision announced that they have procured the rights to base games on the "Entertainment Tonight" television license. We can't wait to see Mary Hart on our PlayStations.



2 Could the PlayStation2 Japanese launch line-up possibly be any more bizarre?

3 Eidos seems to have a great record with games in which large-asseted women carry dual sets of guns.

4 There ain't nothin' more entertaining than torturing Tron Bonne's Servbots.

5 As the PS2 nears release, we're seeing more and more games that really push the capacity of the PSI. Take Vib Ribbon, for example...

6 There's actually only one Jeffries Tube on the USS Voyager. It's true; we've been inside it.

7 Less than a month after signing Sammy Sosa, 3DO's already got his name attached to two games. So when's Sammy Sosa Army Men coming out?

8 Speaking of...Isn't it weird for Sammy Sosa, someone known for making a living hitting the hell out of hardballs to be endorsing 3DO's softball game?

9 We wonder if Vince McMahon got his idea for the XFL after playing a few games of NFL Blitz.

10 If anyone had any sense in their head, they would have a PlayStation version of the "Who Wants to be a Millionaire" game out as soon as possible.

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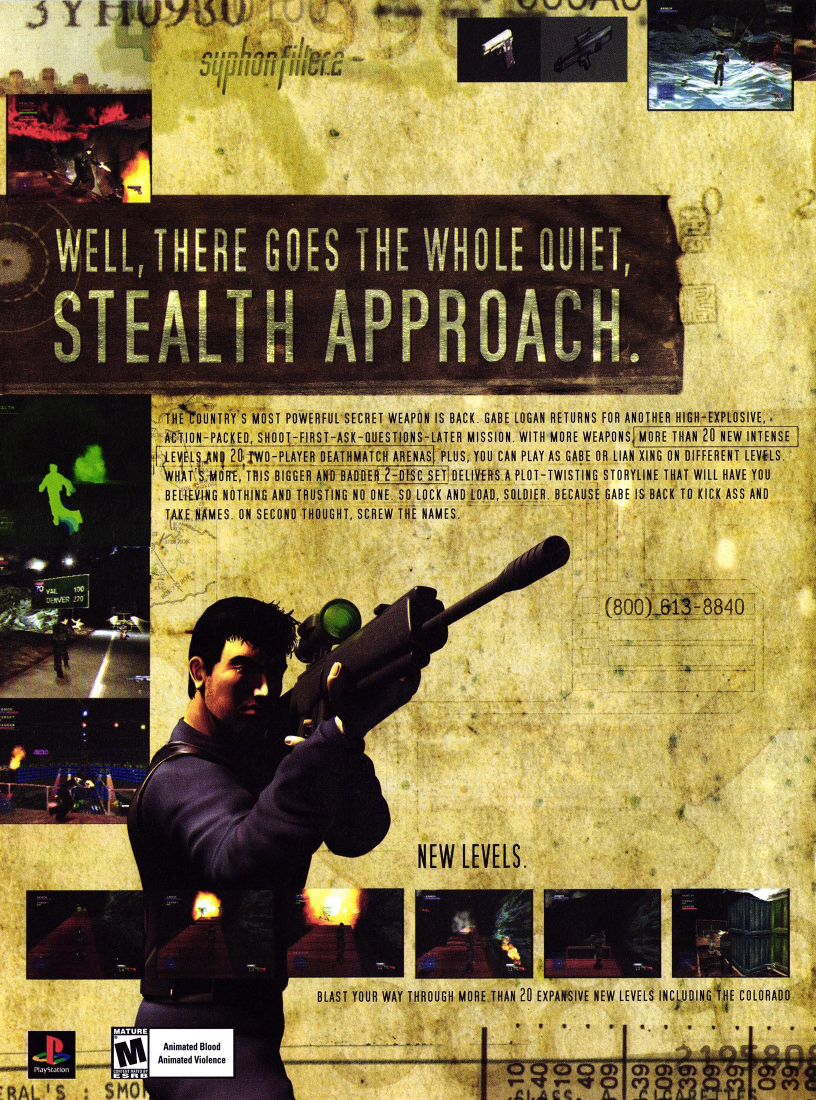

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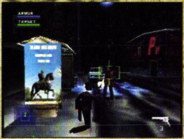
989 STUDIOS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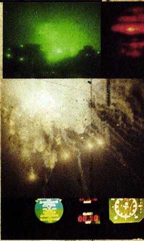

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HEALTH
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DANGER

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MOTOROLA
5 PANOZ MOTORSPORTS
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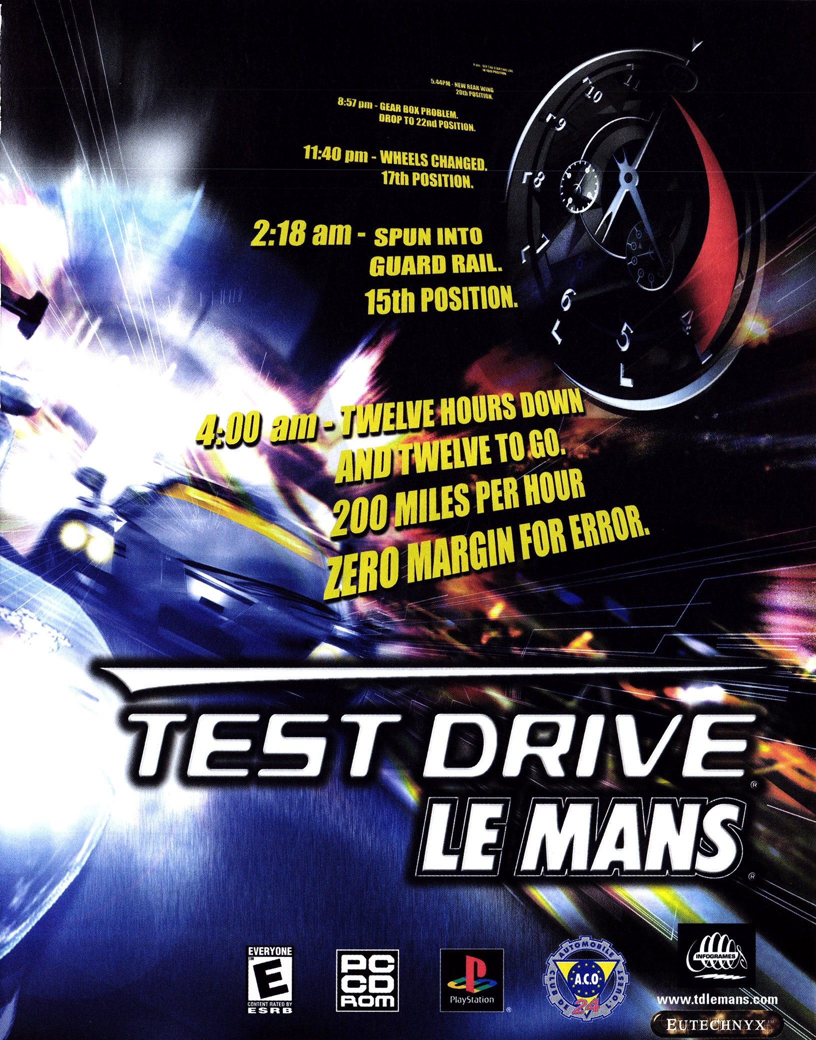
ESSO Ultron


4 pm - OFF THE STARTING LINE
IN [illegible] POSITION.
5:44PM - NEW REAR WING
20th POSITION.
8:57 pm - GEAR BOX PROBLEM.
DROP TO 22nd POSITION.
11:40 pm - WHEELS CHANGED.
17th POSITION.
2:18 am - SPUN INTO
GUARD RAIL.
15th POSITION.
4:00 am - TWELVE HOURS DOWN
AND TWELVE TO GO.
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Top 20

The best-selling U.S. PlayStation titles as reported by the nation's top retailers

1 Gran Turismo 2 ●●●●●

PUBLISHER: SONY CEA LAST MONTH: 1 GENRE: RACING RELEASE DATE: DEC. 1999

Looks like the only games coming anywhere near debunking GT2 this month involve either smaller wheels or the same moniker.

2 Tony Hawk's Pro Skater ●●●●◐

PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION LAST MONTH: 3 GENRE: SPORTS RELEASE DATE: SEPT. 1999

This incredibly playable skateboarding game seems to be selling better every month...and for good reason.

3 Gran Turismo ●●●●●

PUBLISHER: SONY CEA LAST MONTH: 6 GENRE: RACING RELEASE DATE: MAY 1998

With a $20 price tag and mega-hype surrounding its sequel, you might have a hard time finding this one on store shelves.

4 Spyro the Dragon ●●●●○

PUBLISHER: SONY CEA LAST MONTH: 5 GENRE: ACTION RELEASE DATE: SEPT. 1998

Even though Ripto's Rage! is Spyro's latest quality outing, gamers just can't resist the low price of his debut appearance.

5 Dukes of Hazzard ●◐○○○

PUBLISHER: SOUTHPEAK LAST MONTH: - GENRE: RACING RELEASE DATE: DEC. 1999

Those two good ol' boys never did no one no harm (except for the thousands who bought their crappy game last month).

6 Tomorrow Never Dies ●●●◐○
PUBLISHER: EA LAST MONTH: 2 RELEASE DATE: NOV. 1999

7 Crash Bandicoot: Warped ●●●●●
PUBLISHER: SONY CEA LAST MONTH: 12 RELEASE DATE: NOV. 1998

8 Medal of Honor ●●●●○
PUBLISHER: EA LAST MONTH: 19 RELEASE DATE: NOV. 1999

9 Metal Gear Solid ●●●●●
PUBLISHER: KONAMI LAST MONTH: - RELEASE DATE: OCT. 1998

10 Frogger ●●◐○○
PUBLISHER: HASBRO LAST MONTH: 9 RELEASE DATE: OCT. 1997

11 NBA Live 2000 ●●●●◐
PUBLISHER: EA LAST MONTH: 4 RELEASE DATE: NOV. 1999

12 Rugrats ●●●◐○
PUBLISHER: THQ LAST MONTH: 16 RELEASE DATE: NOV. 1998

13 Driver ●●●●○
PUBLISHER: GT INTERACTIVE LAST MONTH: 14 RELEASE DATE: JUNE 1999

14 Namco Museum Volume 3 ●●●◐○
PUBLISHER: NAMCO LAST MONTH: - RELEASE DATE: FEB. 1997

15 Resident Evil 3 Nemesis ●●●●◐
PUBLISHER: CAPCOM LAST MONTH: 8 RELEASE DATE: NOV. 1999

16 Madden NFL 2000 ●●●●●
PUBLISHER: EA LAST MONTH: 15 RELEASE DATE: AUG. 1999

17 Sled Storm ●●●●○
PUBLISHER: EA LAST MONTH: – RELEASE DATE: AUG. 1999

18 Tetris Plus ●●●◐○
PUBLISHER: JALECO LAST MONTH: - RELEASE DATE: OCT. 1996

19 Crash Team Racing ●●●●●
PUBLISHER: SONY CEA LAST MONTH: 7 RELEASE DATE: OCT. 1999

20 Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation ●●●●○
PUBLISHER: EIDOS LAST MONTH: 13 RELEASE DATE: NOV. 1999

namco Presents

Top 10 Most Wanted

As nominated by our attractive, intelligent readers

1. **Gran Turismo 2** How many times can we say it? GT2 is the best racing game ever.
2. **PlayStation2** As you read this, the PS2 is debuting in Japan. Got a passport and a pocket full of yen?
3. **Syphon Filter 2** If you're into more of what made the first one great, then try out this return of Gabe Logan.
4. **Galerians** You don't need the psychic powers of Rion to see that this Crave game is going to be big.
5. **Fear Effect** Beautiful anime-inspired graphics and a solid story make this one an absolute must-play.
6. **Dino Crisis** Out of nowhere, Regina's fight for survival against prehistoric beasts returns to the Top 10.
7. **MediEvil II** Get the details on Sir Dan's return in this month's Previews section.
8. **Final Fantasy VIII** After more than six months on the shelves, you're still clamoring for Squall and company.
9. **Tomba! 2** Good old-fashioned platforming against evil pigs in a stylish pink 'do. What's not to like?
10. **Driver 2** It shouldn't be too much longer before we get some screens for this highly anticipated sequel.

Alex Thompson

Our monthly contest winner's top five picks

1. **Fear Effect** If Alex has the same tastes as us, then he has every reason to put this one atop his list.
2. **Galerians** Crave promises 50 hours of psychologically thrilling gameplay to keep Alex busy for quite a while.
3. **Rollcage: Stage II** If Alex liked the ceiling-sticking action of the first Rollcage, he'll love this sequel.
4. **Spider-Man** Alex should be happy to find that Spidey has slung his way onto this month's Demo Disc.
5. **Resident Evil: Survivor** Alex might not be as stoked for this one after reading the International Previews.

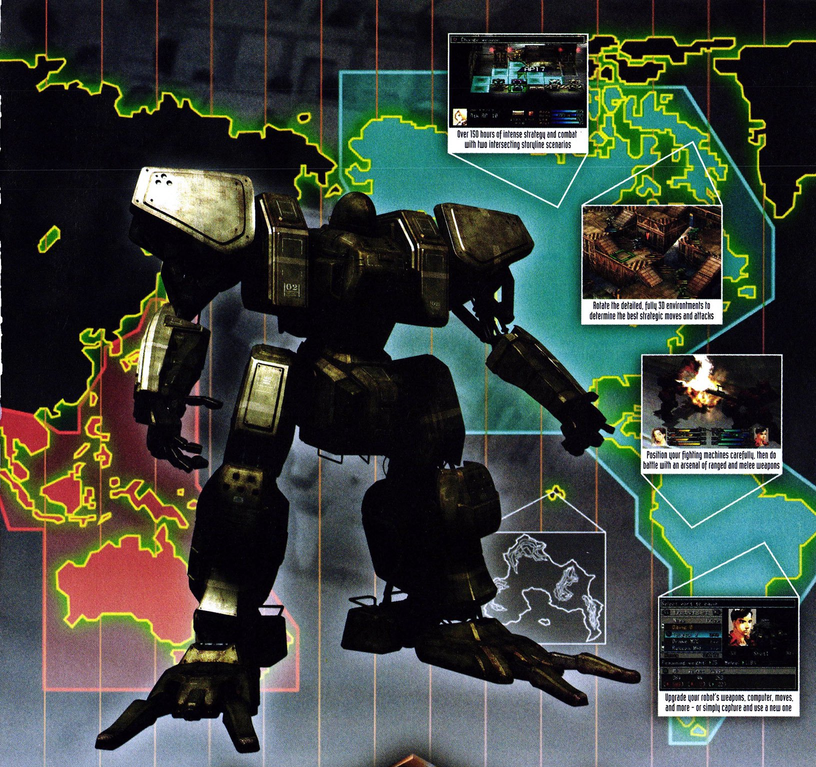
Editors' Top 5

What we've been playing instead of working

1. **WWF SmackDown!** THQ might be starting a trend here with this veritable wrestling RPG.
2. **Fear Effect** When a game makes all three boxes in this sidebar, you know it's something special.
3. **Colony Wars: Red Sun** Not only does it look good...it's actually fun to play!
4. **Ace Combat 3** Incredible graphics and a great flight engine make this simulator worth a look.
5. **The Misadventures of Tron Bonne** Some of the captivating puzzles challenged us for hours!

Send your votes for the Readers' 10 Most Wanted games to: *Official PlayStation Magazine* Attn: Readers' 10 Most Wanted, P.O. Box 3338, Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338 or e-mail us at: chris_m_baker@zd.com or visit the *OPM* section on www.videogames.com

Source: NPD TRSTS Video Games, mid-January 2000. Call them at (516) 625-2345 for questions about this list. Note: No games for competing console systems (e.g., N64, Sega Dreamcast, etc.) were included. Overall sales figures may vary. Game descriptions are written by the *OPM* staff.



Over 150 hours of intense strategy and combat with two intersecting storyline scenarios

Rotate the detailed, fully 3D environments to determine the best strategic moves and attacks

Position your fighting machines carefully, then do battle with an arsenal of ranged and melee weapons

Upgrade your robot's weapons, computer, moves, and more – or simply capture and use a new one

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Animated Violence

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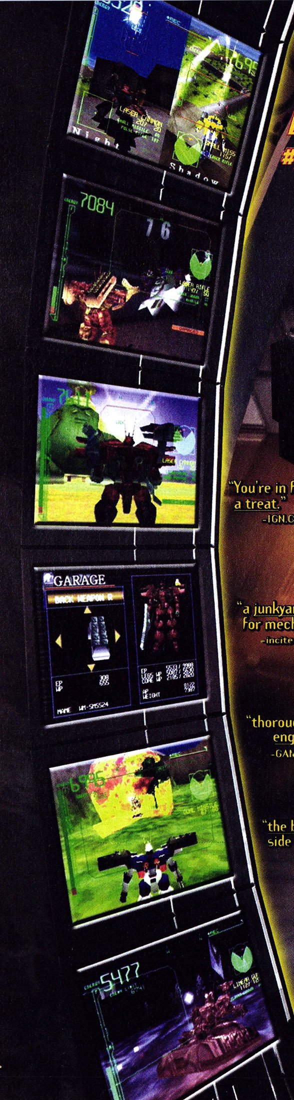
BRACE YOURSELF FOR MORE ARMORED CORE-
#3 IS SO HUGE, IT'S ON TWO DISCS!


Night
Shadow
LASER CANNON
7084
LASER RIFLE
LASER CANNON
GARAGE
BACK WEAPON R
NAME WM-SMS524
DUAL MISSILE
5477
LINEAR GUN

"The Armored Core series has enjoyed a tremendous cult following, and the third installment is sure to please the devoted." -EGM

"You're in for a treat." -IGN.COM

"a junkyard heaven for mech heads." -incite Video Gaming

"thoroughly engrossing." -GAME INFORMER

"the best multiplayer action this side of a PC LAN set up." -incite Video Gaming

"It will make fans of the series ecstatic and new comers will instantly enjoy the fast paced action that awaits." -SILICON MAGAZINE

PlayStation

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Animated Violence

agetec

agetec.com

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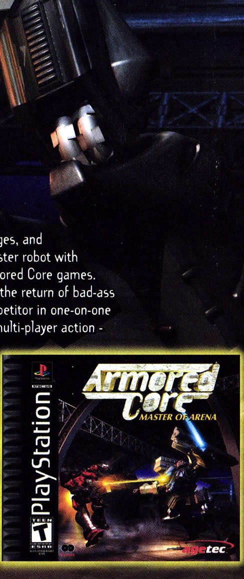
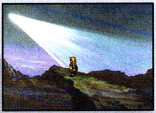
You're a mercenary pilot of an AC unit, so prepare to infiltrate bases, rescue hostages, and destroy hostile enemies in all-new detailed missions. Build and customize your master robot with 27 new weapons and body parts, or use your nastiest saved ACs from previous Armored Core games. Master of Arena is complete with 10 new battle stages and arenas, not to mention the return of bad-ass robot "9-Ball!" And in Arena Mode, battle the computer or challenge a human competitor in one-on-one deathmatches, or connect a link cable and face a serious onslaught of awesome multi-player action - **RAGE ON!**

- Over 180 AC Parts – 27 Brand New (Includes Bonus Hidden Parts!)
- Battle 150+ of the Nastiest Ravens Ever
- 22 Battle Stages – 10 Brand New
- 19 Detailed Missions
- 10 New Arenas
- Use ALL Your Old Armored Core Creations
- 2-Player Combat with Split-Screen & Link Cable Play
- Custom Tailor Your Armored Core with Hundreds of Thousands of Different Weapon & Armor Combos





Clockwise from top left: Wild Arms 2, Star Wars: Jedi Power Battles and Arc the Lad Collection.

Coming Soon

April

Alundra 2	Activision	RPG
Army Men World War	3DO	Action
Countdown Vampires	Bandai	Action
Danger Girl	THQ	Action
Digimon World	Bandai	Sim
Formula One World Grand Prix	Eidos	Racing
Gauntlet Legends	Midway	Action
Gekido	Interplay	Action
High Heat Baseball 2001	3DO	Sports
JoJo's Bizarre Adventure	Capcom	Fighting
Konami Rally	Konami	Racing
Major League Baseball 2001	Fox Sports	Sports
Micro Maniacs	Codemasters	Racing
Need For Speed: Porsche Unleashed	Electronic Arts	Racing
Nightmare Creatures 2	Konami	Action
Renegade Racers	Interplay	Racing
Rhapsody	Atlus	RPG
Shao Lin	THQ	Fighting
Speed Freaks	Sony CEA	Racing
Ultimate Bass Challenge	Electronic Arts	Sports
Walt Disney World Racing	Eidos	Racing
Vanguard Bandits	Working Designs	RPG

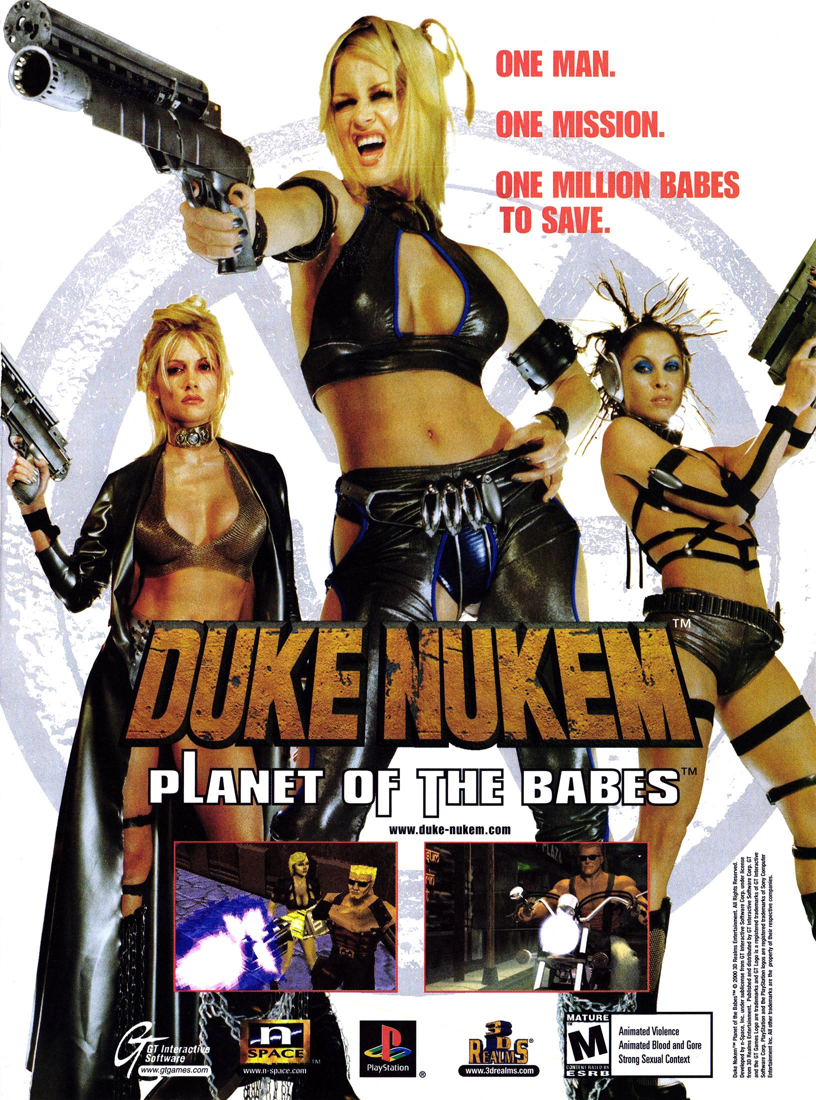
May

Animorphs	GT Interactive	Action
Arena Football League	Midway	Sports
Baldur's Gate	Interplay	RPG
Blaster Master: Blasting Again	Sunsoft	Action
Caesars Palace 2000	Interplay	Misc.
Dragon Valor	Namco	RPG
Duke Nukem 2: Planet Of Babes	GT Interactive	Action
ESPN Major League Soccer	Konami	Sports
Grind Session	Sony CEA	Sports
Jeremy McGrath 2000	Acclaim	Racing
Lunar 2: Eternal Blue	Working Designs	RPG
MediEvil 2	Sony CEA	Action
Mike Tyson Boxing	Codemasters	Sports
Mobil 1 Rally Championship	Electronic Arts	Racing
Paper Boy	Midway	Action
Rampage Through Time	Midway	Action
Rayman 2	Ubisoft	Action
Reel Fishing 2	Crave	Sports
Runabout 2	Tecmo	Action
Tenchu 2: Birth of the Assassin	Activision	Action
Vanishing Point	Acclaim	Racing
Vagrant Story	Square EA	RPG
Wild Arms 2: Second Ignition	Sony CEA	RPG

Future Releases

102 Dalmations	Eidos	Action
Alien Resurrection	Fox Interactive	Action
Alone in the Dark 4	Infogrames	Action
Arc the Lad Collection	Working Designs	RPG
Austin Powers	Rockstar	Action
Bass Masters Classic Tournament Edition	THQ	Sports
Blade	Activision	Action
Breath of Fire IV	Capcom	RPG
CART Racing	Midway	Racing
Casper Stealth	Learning	Action
Championship Motocross 2	THQ	Racing
Chrono Cross	Square EA	RPG
Darkstone	Take 2 Interactive	RPG
Dragon Quest VII	Enix	RPG
Driver 2	GT Interactive	Action
Evil Dead: Hail to the King	THQ	Action
Expendable	Infogrames	Action
Frogger 2	Hasbro	Action
Final Fantasy IX	Square EA	RPG
Gravity Games	Midway	Sports
Hellboy	DH Interactive	Action
Hot Wheels Turbo Racing 2	Electronic Arts	Racing
Jeff Gordon XS Racing	ASC Games	Racing
Star Wars: Jedi Power Battles	Lucasarts	Fighting
KISS: Psycho Circus	Rockstar Games	Action
Legend Of Dragoon	Sony CEA	RPG
Legend of Mana	Square EA	RPG
Lego Soccer	Lego Media	Sports
Mat Hoffman's Pro BMX	Activision	Sports
Messiah	Interplay	Action
MTV Sports: Skateboarding	THQ	Sports
MTV Sports: Snowboarding 2	THQ	Sports
MTV Sports: BMX	THQ	Racing
Mortal Kombat Special Forces	Midway	Action
NASCAR Heat	Hasbro	Racing
NASCAR Racers	Hasbro	Racing
N-GEN Racing	Infogrames	Racing
NFL Gameday 2001	Sony CEA	Sports
Parasite Eve 2	Square EA	RPG
Planet of the Apes	Fox Interactive	Action
Polaris SnoCrossing	Vatical	Racing
Power Rangers Lightspeed Rescue	THQ	Action
Resident Evil Survivor	Capcom	Shooting
Rogue Trip 2	GT Interactive	Action
Rugrats in Paris	THQ	Action
Scooby Doo	THQ	Action
Spider-Man	Activision	Action
Test Drive Rally	Infogrames	Racing
Test Drive Cycles	Infogrames	Racing
Threads of Fate	Square EA	RPG
Tony Hawk Pro Skater 2	Activision	Action
Ultimate Fighting Championship	Crave	Action
Unreal	GT Interactive	Action
X-Men	Activision	Fighting

All release dates are tentative and subject to change. More information on all future releases will be given as it becomes available.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CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
Animated Violence
Animated Blood and Gore
Strong Sexual Context

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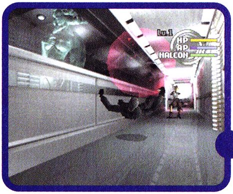
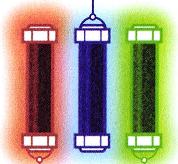
-GameFan.com

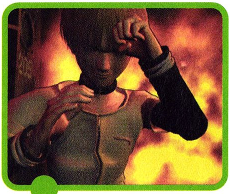
"Hope your PlayStation has a nightlight on it..."
-GameProWorld.com

C:\RION
JDS:\VF-G9
D-Felon=Telekinesis
The ability to deliver powerful psychic blasts!

Master a totally unique arsenal of psychic abilities! They are your only defense against the sinister Galerians.





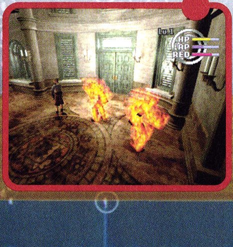


C:\RION
JDS:\YH-S5
Red=Pyrokinesis
The ability to mentally incinerate matter!

Become totally immersed in a fully realized 3D universe that is yours to explore, yours to master – yours to obliterate!

C:\RION
JDS: MX-J4
Nalacon=Psychokinesis
The ability to levitate and freeze matter!

Over 50 hours of reality warping gameplay, plus over 70 minutes of stunning cinematics that propel the gripping story.



The Galerians are an artificially created techno-species whose prime directive is the total annihilation of the human race.

Earth's only hope is Rion, a young man whose greatest weapon is the energy of his mind. By using Psychic Power Enhancement Chemicals, Rion is able to wage psychic war on the Galerians.

Unfortunately, chemicals have their side effects....

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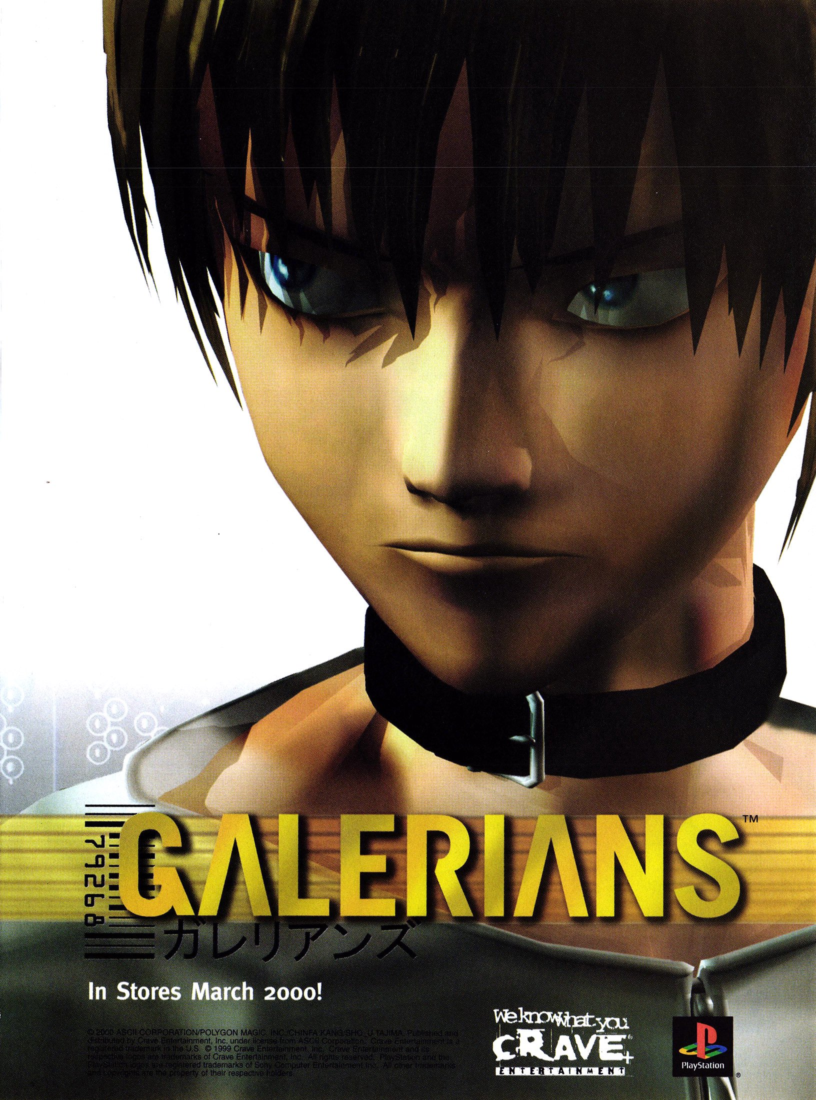
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PlayStation

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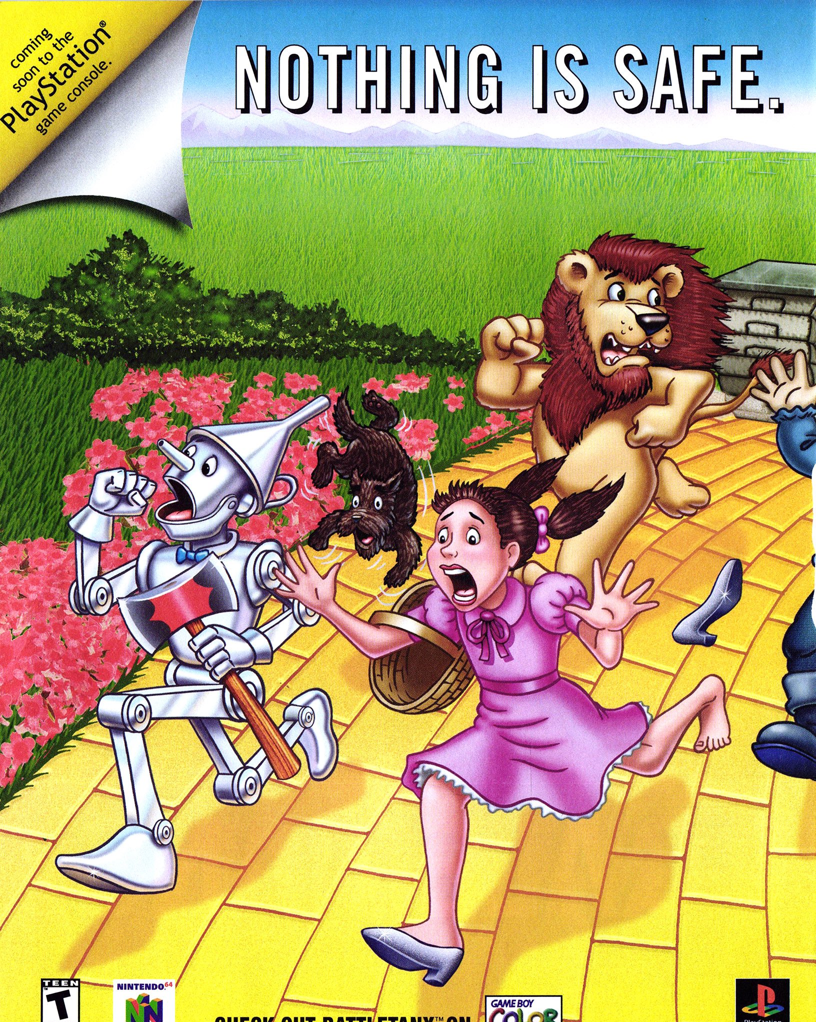
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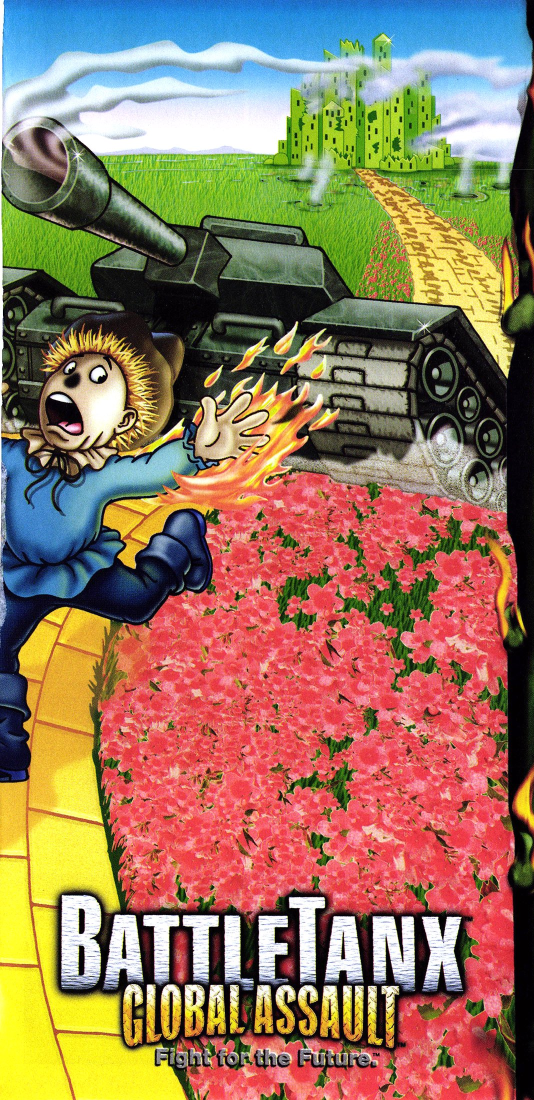

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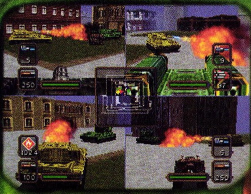
and modes of destruction



Four Player
head-to-head action

22 new levels and 12
havoc-wreaking tanks

3DO™

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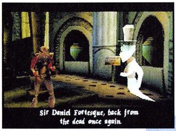
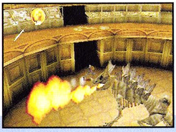
Theme: Action
# of Players: 1
Availability: May 2000
Developer: Sony CEE
Publisher: Sony CEA
URL: www.playstation.com

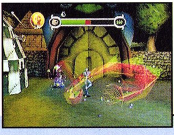
MediEvil II

It's re-resurrection time for Sir Dan



This young, cockney-voiced ghost, Winston, is always there to keep you abreast of the situation and to provide gameplay tips.





Being reawakened from the dead must really suck. Just ask Sir Daniel Fortesque. With the upcoming release of MediEvil II, this supernatural set of circumstances has now twice befallen our favorite undead skeletal warrior. And this time it's even worse.

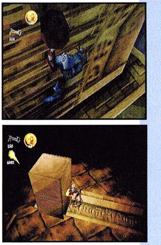
Over 500 years have passed since he ended the malevolent plans of Lord Zarok, and Sir Dan has unwillingly re-arisen to find himself part of the poorly tended "Medieval Gallowmere" section of a Victorian London museum. Now the less-than-articulate knight must figure out exactly why he's back—and what he can do to get back to his peaceful eternal slumber.

MediEvil II returns gamers to the comically gothic style of play established in the original, with even more added in an attempt to surpass the original's Burton-esque brilliance. As with the first MediEvil, most of the action is hack-and-slash fighting against the likes of zombies, imps and other bizarre monstrosities. However, those jolly European Sony chaps have decided to add a bit more complexity this time out. Improved AI means that enemies might flee, attack, or react in some other way pertaining to the situation. Much of your success against these ghouls and goons also depends on which type of weapon you use. In many cases, for instance, the short range of your cane-stick is preferred to a distanced pistol shot.

As he makes his way through the longer, puzzle-filled levels in his journey, Sir Dan encounters a variety of new characters, both friend and foe. Those on his side will offer helpful tips, develop new weapons and items, and—in the case of a resurrected mummified Egyptian princess—even provide a love interest. Meanwhile, an occultist named Lord Palethorne represents the game's antagonist, and don't be surprised to meet up with Jack the Ripper.

Though Dan makes his way through the game mostly in one piece, he might also experience the occasional decapitation. In one level, his headless body must reclaim its upper-most appendage, which has been stolen and dropped by a parrot. By engaging DanCam mode, you'll see what the head sees via first-person perspective as you attempt to guide the body to its destination. From then on, you can use the head separately from the body to help solve puzzles or even place it atop another entity (i.e., a boxing monster or severed hand) in other tight spots.

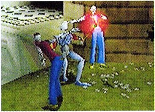
In its current, early version MediEvil II looks and feels more playable than many completed games currently on store shelves. With great graphics, an impressive framerate and another humorously macabre story, Sir Dan's second quest might turn him into one of gaming's most popular characters. Which leads us to wonder: Is it too early to speculate on a third resurrection?



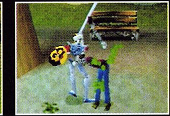
Climbing (top) and pushing large objects (bottom) are two of Sir Dan's new abilities.

Methods of Annihilation

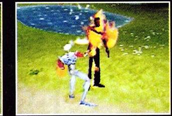
Much of MediEvil II's fun factor lies in your ability to destroy enemies in a number of ways, with the victim's reaction dependent on the type of weapon used. Here are just a few different ways to slay a zombie.



Use the cane for a nice poke in the gut...



...slice n' dice with the sword...

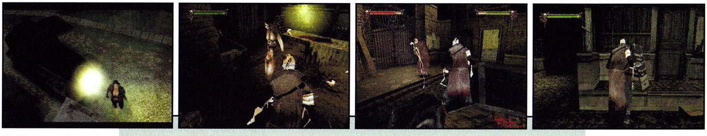


...or just burn 'em to a crisp with the torch.

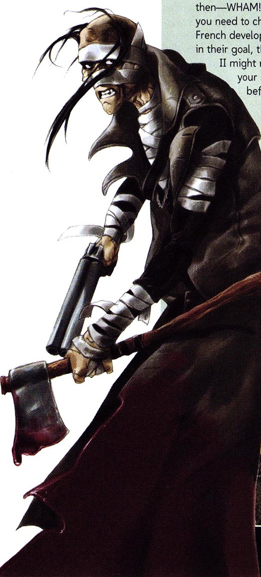
Theme: Action
# of Players: 1
Availability: March 2000
Developer: Kalisto
Publisher: Konami/Universal
URL: www.konami.com

Nightmare Creatures II

Kalisto consults the classics to create this chiller



The in-game cinematics of NC2 occur frequently, often just prior to an important confrontation.



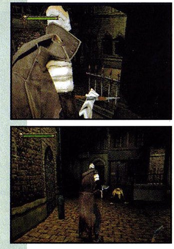
Imagine yourself watching a horror flick alone in your dark room at 1:00 a.m. As the buxom doomed babe progresses through the hallway, the music draws you to lean in until you're literally at the edge of your seat... And then—WHAM! Out jumps the killer and you need to change your pants. If the French developers at Kalisto succeeded in their goal, then Nightmare Creatures II might make you wanna check your stock of clean underwear before playing.

Set in 1934—a full century after the events of the original—NC2 aims just as much to pay homage to the *Friday the 13th*s and *Evil Dead*s of the world as it does to provide a solid gameplaying experience. And what better place to start things off than an insane asylum?

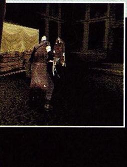
Your game begins with an axe-wielding certified lunatic, Herbert Wallace, whose condition is entirely due to perennial NC antagonist Adam Crowley. He wants revenge and won't let a barrage of zombies and other monstrosities stand in his way. But Wallace isn't alone in his disdain for Crowley. Equally pissed and determined is a raven-haired beauty named Rachelle Donnerty who knows how to use her lethal daggers.

Kalisto has given special treatment to many of the first game's problems, allowing players to better enjoy parading their hell-bent fighters through rainy city streets, catacombs and other creepy 3D settings. All levels—now 50 percent larger than before—are designed to represent real European locales and feature plenty of new special weapons to pick up. The camera has also been tweaked so as to avoid any awkward angles often produced by 3D engines. Gamers desiring to open doors in the background or even just kick things over might rejoice in the greater interactivity, and everyone should find the frequent automatic save points to make life just a bit easier. Finally, pressing backward on your control pad will now actually move you in that direction.

Though the demo we received could have been a little less buggy, Kalisto certainly seems to be on the right track. It looks like those 1.5 million people worldwide who purchased the first game have something to look forward to.



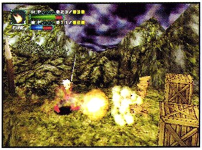
Special weapons like guns can help out greatly but come in limited quantities. Only use them when you need to.

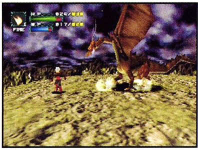


Theme: RPG
# of Players: 1

Availability: Summer
Developer: Namco

Publisher: Namco
URL: www.namco.com

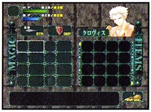


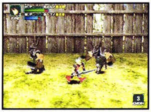


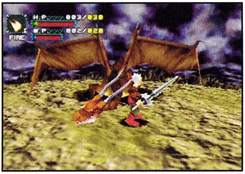
Dragon Valor

Namco brings gamers a tale of soul and sword (and dragons)

One dragon you can handle—but a whole flock of 'em?







The mighty beast is slain (above).

The PS has firmly established itself as the RPG aficionado's platform of choice, with flagship series from Square and Enix, die-hard titles from Working Designs and Atlus, and supporting games from such varied developers as Konami, Capcom and Namco. Yet despite this wealth of traditional RPGs, action RPG fans have always been left seemingly high and dry. To date, choices have ranged from the exceedingly difficult (Alundra) to the exceedingly simplistic (Chocobo's Mysterious Dungeon), with nary a middle ground to be seen. On the PlayStation, the space normally filled by games like Zelda, Beyond Oasis, and Soul Blazer is nothing but a big, black hole. Into the void comes Dragon Valor, Namco's stab at the action RPG genre.

Dragon Valor combines elements of 3D platformers, side-scrolling brawlers like Final Fight, and traditional action RPGs. The dragon-slaying hero will find plenty of baddies to dispatch with his sword. Either a regular strike or a charged attack is at your disposal, and multiple strikes can be chained together. Level design is typical side-scroller fare, from left to right with minimal movement into the foreground and background. A pinch of puzzles and a dash of jumping action have been tossed in for good measure. You eventually acquire the typical multitude of canonical RPG spells such as heal, fire, lightning and ice, but in a slight twist, magic spells are not only used to attack and defend, but to solve many of the puzzles that impede your progress.

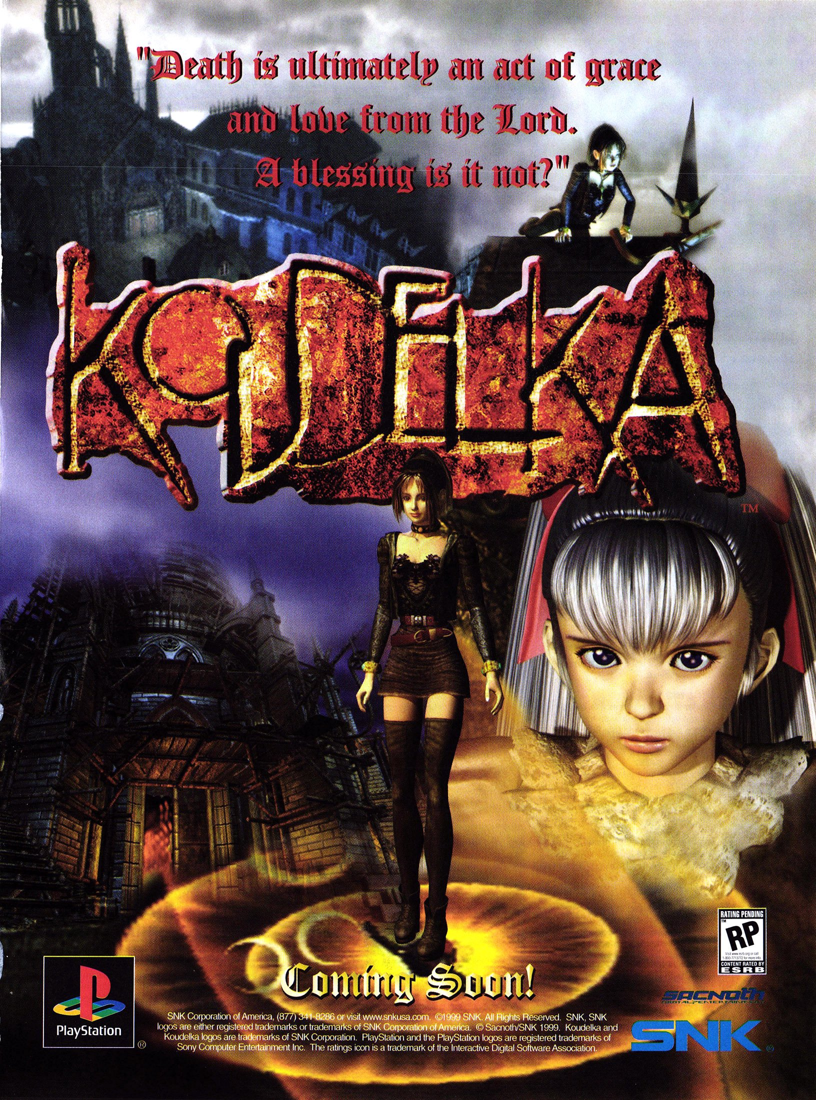
Defeating foes nets you money and items. Money, of course, is used to purchase items from stores. Items are used from an inventory screen; the hero can only carry 12 items at a time. With its limited inventory, small spell list, and straightforward level design, Dragon Valor plays like an action game with RPG elements, not vice versa. Savvy fans may find a resemblance to Namco's seminal coin-op, Dragonbuster.

One of Dragon Valor's innovations is a generational system, called the "Heredity System," that bears many similarities to that of Phantasy Star III. Clovis' chosen bride determines the descendent you take control of next—and his child, your third character. Will you marry a beautiful princess or a homely townsperson? Your choice opens up different levels, unique story elements, and new adventures. Namco hopes this system will extend the replay value of the title, as gamers will want to see every possible permutation of the potential family tree. However, all of a character's statistics, spells, and weapons carry over from one generation to the next, so the "new" character really isn't too terribly different from the "old" one.

With its unique combination of fighting, platforming and RPG elements, Dragon Valor may be the sort of title that appeals to a wide fan base. Hopefully, Namco's developers have been up to the formidable task presented by such an ambitious game design.

Hero Valor

At the end of each level awaits a dragon that needs slaying. Many of the dragons have different elemental affiliations; to defeat them, you must track down a different magical blade. Boss battles take place in enclosed arenas that permit quasi-3D movement, giving the encounters more of an epic "duel" feel. If you've mastered all of your slaying techniques up to that point, dispatching these fiery bad boys shouldn't be a problem.


"Death is ultimately an act of grace
and love from the Lord.
A blessing is it not?"
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Romance of the Three Kingdoms VI
China's on the verge of collapse and the emergence of powerful warlords dominates the landscape in this epic strategy RPG.

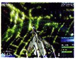
Nightmare Creatures 2
The sinister Adam Crowley has escaped to the 20th century, where he encounters new monsters which means more gore and blood!

Deception III
Tecmo's long-lasting series continues. If you were a fan of the first two games, you're going to want to get ahold of this.

FAMILY
GAME
PACK

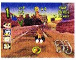
Family Game Pack
Just like the good-old days, the family can gather in the living room for some wholesome fun. This time, with a PlayStation game.

Arena Football
From the makers of the popular NFL Blitz series, Midway, this game goes one step further in the "no-holds-barred" football arena.



Macross VF-X2
Big robots with big guns fill this fast-paced 3D action shooter from Bandai. Fans of the Robotech franchise will love it.

Dragon Valor
Similar in style to games like Zelda, Dragon Valor is a follow-up to Namco's 1984 arcade title Dragon Buster.



Disney World Racing
This CTR-like multiplayer racer features beloved Disney characters like Chip and Dale, Jiminy Cricket, etc. Tracks are inspired by rides like Space Mountain.

Test Drive Cycles
Featuring the Harley-Davidson license, this is the ultimate thrill ride on two wheels. Yee-haaa!

Ace Combat 3
Namco's latest installment features two discs' worth of high-quality animation and expansive sound effects. Don't miss the high-altitude action.

Army Men World War
This is technically the "sequel" to Army Men 3D. Think 3D action with lots of shooting, co-op play and strategic elements.

Superbike 2000
This game brings the complete motorcycle-racing package straight into your home. Just think: all the thrill without the pain!

Speed Punks
Blast foolish opponents out of your way with a variety of weapons, including missiles and green ooze. Great four-player racing fun!

JoJo's Bizarre Adventure
Capcom's unique 2D fighter based on the original manga and anime of the same name. The five main "Jos" battle Dio, a vampire who wants to stop time.

Street Sk8er 2
Jump on your board and race against the clock to score points and upgrade your wheels.

Galerians
Crave is giving us something to be scared about in 2000—this psychological thriller with 70 minutes of FMV, console-induced terror.

Wild Arms 2
Wild Arms 2nd Ignition tells the tale of heroes Ashley, Brad and Riruka as they traverse the world of Filgaia—now in full 3D.

Test Drive Le Mans
The ultimate driving tour de force. And if you feel like staying up all night, there's a 24-hour challenge packed in.

MediEvil II
In Sony's sequel to MediEvil, this time there's a slew of new enemies and levels, increased puzzle-solving and more character interaction.

Grind Session
With a hardcore approach, Sony takes its turn entering the ever-popular skateboarding game park.

NASCAR Rumble
A racing game that will appeal to NASCAR fans as well as those who've never seen a NASCAR race.

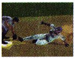
The Legend of Dragoon
This game from Sony is a combination of scrolling fighting action and platform jumping that has a distinctly old-school flavor to it.

Colony Wars Red Sun
Improved textures, live orchestra soundtrack, 30 new weapons, eight customizable ships and dramatic FMV set the scene for this space shooter.

Rollcage Extreme
Psygnosis' latest racer features four new leagues, six new environments and a staggering 20 new tracks. Unstoppable vehicles stick to walls!

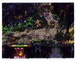
Major League Soccer
Konami's International Superstar Soccer gets a new name, look and license. A must for fans of Major League Soccer.

Lunar 2
The success and level of interest in the first Lunar assures that we get the sequel. RPG fans should set some time aside for this.



Triple Play 2001
An all-new point of view fielding, big league challenge and 500-home run club round out the new additions to this hit EA baseball series.

Risk II
The year is 1812. Napoleon's army is on the march, and it's every empire for itself.



Gauntlet Legends
Motorcycle racing doesn't get a look very often in video games, so if you're a fan of the sport it's worth checking out.

Vanguard Bandits
Set in a world where mythology and technology are one, huge robots are the dominant instruments of warfare in an otherwise medieval society.

Alien Resurrection
A group of mercenaries and the clone/alien hybrid of Ripley must escape the military research ship which has been overrun by aliens.

Messiah
It was foretold that the messiah would return after 2000 years. Apparently, he caught an earlier flight.

Jeremy McGrath Supercross 2000
Jeremy took last season off, but he's back along with eight stadium cours es, eight motocross tracks, and an improved version of the track editor.

Saga Frontier 2
A return to the epic quest that made Saga Frontier such a hit among adventure game lovers.

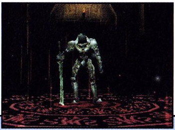
Theme: Adventure RPG
# of Players: 1
Availability: May 2000
Developer: Squaresoft
Publisher: Square EA
URL: www.squaresoft.com

HP 205•205 MP 53•53
RISK ZERO

Vagrant Story

Looking for a different kind of RPG? Vagrant Story should cease your wanderings.

HP 164•205 MP 79•53
RISK 34



The only thing worse than an eight-foot knight is an eight-foot demon knight.

RPG fans love medieval settings. Unfortunately, most are filled with hyperkinetic 14-year-olds that destroy any chance at a mature or foreboding mood. Square's Vagrant Story comes as a breath of fresh (or is that dank?) air for gamers burnt out on chipper adventuring. Think Metal Gear Solid—circa 1499.

Players control Riskbreaker Ashley Riot, special agent of the Valencia Knights of the Peace, who is sent to investigate a murder at Duke Bardorba's manor. Most likely suspect? The effeminate, metal-armed leader of the Müllenkamp cult: Sydney Losstarot. Sydney's cult is determined to gain the power of the abandoned, cursed city Lea Monde—and per standard badass operating procedures, Ashley's going to stop him single-handedly.

Vagrant Story's graphical flair is sure to catch gamers' eyes; producer Yasumi Matsuno (Final Fantasy Tactics) and character designer Akihiko Yoshida (FFT, Ogre Battle) have crafted a fully detailed, ornately textured world that pushes the PlayStation to its absolute limit. As in Metal Gear Solid, the story unfolds via in-game engine cut scenes. But with no voice acting and shorter story sequences, Vagrant Story's focus is nearly pure gameplay.

As with Square's Parasite Eve, battles unfold directly on the area where they begin. Players attack foes with any of several dozen weapons: swords, broadswords, rapiers, daggers, axes, pikes, and more. Each weapon has a unique strength and target range; moreover, Ashley and opponents have "zones," or body segments, that can be individually targeted for maximum effect.

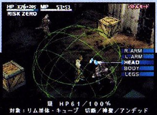
Battles are spiced up with Chain Abilities and Defense Abilities. Both types rely on split-second timing. Gamers freely assign up to three Abilities of each type to controller buttons. After landing a successful strike, pressing one of the assigned buttons combos into a Chain Ability such as an extra attack or a poison sting. Moves can be continuously chained for as long as the player can keep up the timing. Use a weapon repeatedly, and Ashley will learn one of several "Break Arts." These HP draining attacks deal immense amounts of damage. Ashley also learn four types of magic spells (Warlock, Theology, Sorcery, and Enchant) from ancient tomes called "Grimoires" scattered throughout Lea Monde.

Rushing into the depths of Lea Monde pell-mell, however, is a certified recipe for disaster. Everytime Ashley chains an attack or casts a spell his "Risk Meter" increases accordingly. Too high a Risk means missed attacks and ineffectual strikes, so choose your battles carefully and rest in between encounters to reduce risk. As an extra incentive, HP and MP slowly refill when gamers aren't in combat.

With its unprecedented blend of action, adventure, and RPG elements, Vagrant Story—thankfully—breaks many gaming conventions. Despite the title's comparatively short length, the stellar presentation and rock-solid gameplay should make it a success when it hits U.S. stores this May.

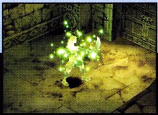
Get A Grip (and a Blade)

Weapons have varying levels of effectiveness against each of Vagrant Story's six enemy types: Human, Beast, Phantom, Undead, Dragon, and Evil. Using a weapon repeatedly against a single enemy type increases the weapon's efficiency against said type. Ashley will come across several "Factories" within the depths of Lea Monde. Here, he can break his weapons into their component "Blades" and "Grips." Blades and Grips can then be recombined to form new, nameable weapons. Some weapons can be forged with magic stones for increased strength and abilities. With nearly infinite weaponry at Ashley's disposal, the Müllenkamp cult had best beware.

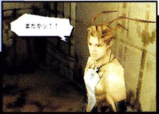


Would you ever not target the head?

Beautifully lit environments.



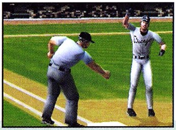
Healing is a Theological spell.

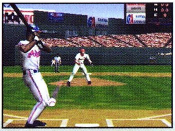


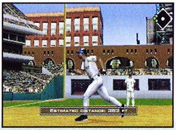
Ashley Riot: Chicks dig the hair.

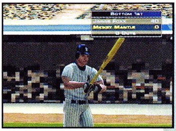
Triple Play 2001

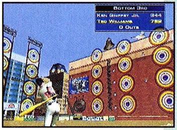
Theme: Sports
# of Players: 1-2
Availability: March
Developer: TREY ARCH
Publisher: Electronic Arts
URL: www.ea.com











Ted Williams takes a mighty hack at the targets to gain extra points in the Extreme Target home run derby.

If you liked Triple Play 2000 as much as we did, then you're probably wondering the same thing as us: What can possibly be done to top what could well be the greatest PlayStation baseball game ever? EA's answer seems simple—just add more.

All of the components of TP2000 return for Triple Play 2001—everything from player creation and modification to the color-trailed baseball that so wishes it was a Fox hockey puck. Buck Martinez and Jim Hughson also return to call the games.

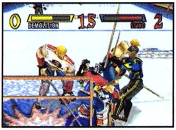
And then there's the new stuff. As you might expect, the game addresses any changes made in the MLB's off-season (trades, new stadiums, etc.). Better physical and stylistic representations of star players have helped improve the graphics, and new animations like umpire arguments and post-game celebrations make for some nice eye candy. Earn rewards by achieving certain in-game feats and proceed past the World Series to take on other all-star teams from around the globe in the World Tournament.

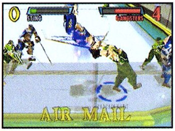
But TP2001's most worthwhile enhancement lies in the addition of all-time greats like Babe Ruth, Cy Young and Hank Aaron. Many of them must be unlocked as a reward before being placed into your favorite team's lineup, but members of the 500 Home Run Club are available at any time to belt it over the fence in the Home Run Derby. Here, you can also face them off against modern players or place them in the new Extreme Target mode, a different type of home run derby which tallies points for distance and hitting targets.

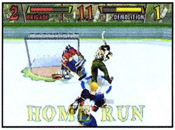
But are all of these new features enough to recommend Triple Play 2001 over its predecessor? Keep your eyes open for a review in next month's issue.

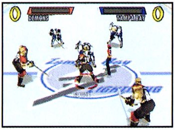
Rock the Rink

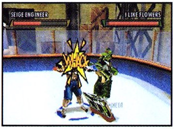
Theme: Sports
# of Players: 1-2
Availability: March
Developer: Electronic Arts
Publisher: Electronic Arts
URL: www.ea.com

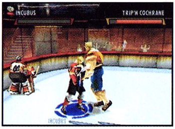












As if being able to engage in fisticuffs with the other team isn't enough, there's even a championship belt held by the most brutal combatant.

For the past several years, EA has continued to develop its line of sports games with a focus on simulation, watching Midway and 989 Studios develop the likes of NFL Blitz, NBA Jam and NFL Xtreme. But now it seems that EA has finally realized something: "Didn't we used to do that?"

Harking back to its Mutant League series on the Genesis, EA's Rock the Rink could be the most brutal, fast-paced hockey game ever released. Sticks to the face and use of the almighty fist are more than encouraged in this three-on-three (plus goalies) war on the ice—and there's no annoying penalty box to slow things down. You can fancy up your goal scoring with five superhuman moves or pound opponents with a variety of special combos. From time to time players will also duke it out as though they starred in a fighting game. If a team beats up on the other effectively or makes a series of good plays, it eventually heats up as though "on fire" in a Midway game. Meanwhile, two Canadian-accented announcers provide play by play with a plethora of unexpected, often bleeped-out comments.

The game includes nine fantasy teams, and the 28 professional ones (complete with their most butt-kicking players) can be unlocked through NHL Challenge mode. Continued success will even net some hidden rewards and more power for your team.

Rock the Rink's current version could use some refinement in the ways of control and graphics, but it shows great potential in the way of all-out fun. We can't wait to see how this one turns out.

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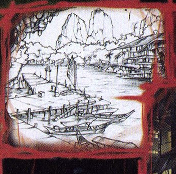
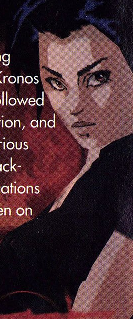
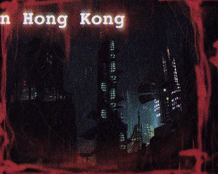
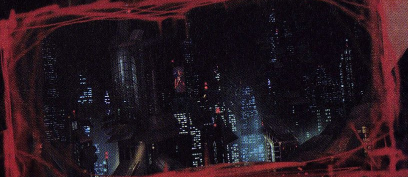




This month we've decided to give you a brief look at the amazing art generated to make this massive game. The design team at Kronos Digital Entertainment began with highly detailed 2D sketches, followed by a rendered 3D model in low resolution, and finalized in high resolution with the various background animations. Over 600 backgrounds were created for the seven locations resulting in a game unlike anything seen on the PlayStation.
Enjoy...



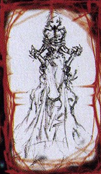
Downtown Hong Kong

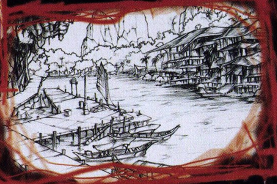


THE GAMEPLAY TAKES PLACE OVER FULL MOTION VIDEO SEQUENCES CREATING A WORLD FILLED WITH MOVEMENT RANGING FROM FLASHING BILLBOARDS TO INTENSE HELICOPTER CHASE SCENES.

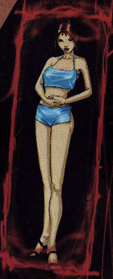
Hong Kong Harbor

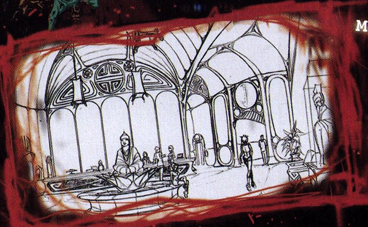
THE MOST ALIVE AND ACTIVE ENVIRONMENTS YET TO BE SEEN IN A VIDEO GAME.





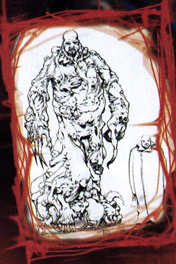
The Hak Sik River

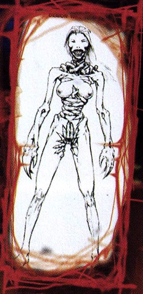


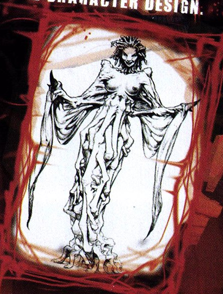


Madame Chen's

ORIGINAL ANIME STYLE CHARACTER DESIGN.







THROUGH LOGICAL PLOT EDITING, YOU CAN TAKE ON THE ROLES OF ALL THREE MAIN CHARACTERS.
HELL...
MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB
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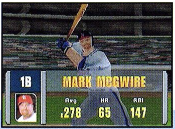
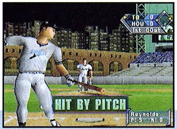
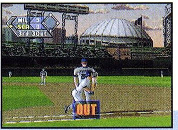
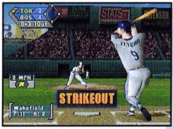
Sammy Sosa High Heat Baseball 2001

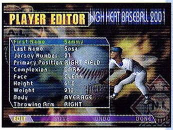
Theme: Sports
# of Players: 1-2
Availability: March 2000
Developer: Team .366
Publisher: 3DO
URL: www.3do.com











First Name	Sammy
Last Name	Sosa
Jersey Number	21
Primary Position	RIGHT FIELD
Complexion	DARK
Face	CLEAN
Height	6' 0
Weight	210
Body	AVERAGE
Throwing Arm	RIGHT

HH2001 allows you to modify the features and abilities of any player, even obscurities like patience at the plate and tendency to pull the ball.

3DO is the first to admit that their upcoming baseball effort, Sammy Sosa High Heat Baseball 2001, graphically falls well behind the Triple Plays and MLBs of the world. But contend that there's a better game of baseball out this year and the company takes serious issue. In fact, 3DO claims to have created what is now the best baseball simulation ever released on the PS.

Skeptical? You're probably not alone. Though lauded on PC, High Heat Baseball 2000's PlayStation incarnation was universally panned, charitably given a one-disc rating in the mag you're reading now. But the attention paid toward making HH2000 a great PC game has been redirected at doing the same for the PS's HH2001.

HH2001 attempts to win over non-believers by perfecting all of the little things. Computer batters—especially those with a notoriously good eye like Jeff Bagwell—refuse to swing until they get something to hit, often taking a walk. Meanwhile, pitchers use the count to their advantage by strategically using the same pitches as their real-life counterparts. Expect to see outfielders hitting the proper cutoff man, intelligent baserunners, sacrifices, and even the occasional suicide squeeze should the situation call for it. And if you're after Griffey in a trade, don't count on getting him for an untested rookie. In other words, HH2001 is just plain smart.

In its early previewable version, HH2001 seems to be headed in the right direction as far as providing a solid game of baseball. But considering its unremarkable graphics and absence of other "bells and whistles," is it enough to recommend the game over Triple Play or MLB? The answer should be evident soon.

Speed Punks

Theme: Racing
# of Players: 1-4
Availability: April 2000
Developer: FunCom
Publisher: Sony CEA
URL: www.playstation.com

1st
SPEED 114
LAP 1/3
2nd
SPEED 134
LAP 1/3

LAP
TIME
3
43

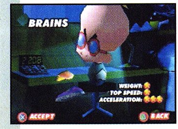
Over on the other side of the Atlantic, Sony Computer Entertainment Europe's Speed Freaks has given English gamers a reason to set aside Crash Team Racing—at least for a while. Renamed Speed Punks (apparently punks are more marketable than freaks stateside), the title should make its way over here shortly.

As one of six prepubescent attitudinal racers, zoom your way across 12 completely unique tracks, each replete with shortcuts. Like many other games in the cartoonish kart-racing vein, driving through a question mark box grants you a weapon to use against any opponent unfortunate enough to feel your wrath. Your typical projectiles, slippery objects and bombs are accompanied by more creative ways to disrupt their path, like the over-inflative Tire Pop and speed-depleting Shockwave. But remember: Anything you can do, those other track brats can too—and quite intelligently at that. Expect to be impeded not only by weapons, but also by bumps from the racers themselves. But of course, you can always outrun them by collecting Speed Boost Tokens for your turbo meter.

Speed Punks promises a smooth and fast-playing gaming experience, the fun amplified when four players join in at once with the Multi-Tap. Those who prefer to take to the tracks alone, however, can compete in a tournament mode that rewards you with bonuses for first-place finishes. Not enough for you? Then assemble your own personalized circuit with the custom feature.

Keeping in mind that the game has been available overseas for months, the early version of Speed Punks plays incredibly well. But does this mob of misfits have what it takes to usurp King Crash? We'll find out soon enough.

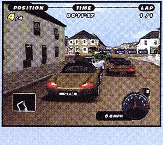
SPEED 127
SPEED 131
SPEED 114

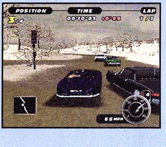


Each racer has his or her own strengths and weaknesses—not to mention a completely unique personality.

Need for Speed: Porsche Unleashed

Theme: Racing
# of Players: 1-4
Availability: March
Developer: Eden
Publisher: Electronic Arts
URL: www.ea.com

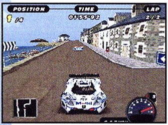


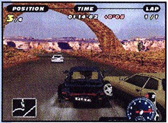


With the utter brilliance of Gran Turismo 2 still satiating the needs of many PlayStation racing fans, some might wonder why competing companies even bother releasing other games in the genre. In EA's case, the answer is simple: They have the Porsche.

Excluded from GT2, this line of vehicles almost synonymous with the title "sports car" makes its presence felt in the fifth installment of the Need for Speed franchise, Porsche Unleashed. In many ways a celebration of the European speed machines, the title sets itself apart by providing not only a high-speed racing experience...but also a history lesson. Expect to encounter over 50 types of Porsches, ranging from the original 1948 356 Roadster to the recent 2000 996 Turbo. Your chance to drive each of these comes in a new career-based Evolution mode, in which you'll race decade by decade against the Porsches associated with the time. New vehicles and parts are purchased throughout, with prices dependent on factors like supply, demand, inflation and depreciation. Porsche Unleashed's other new gameplay mode might remind you of Driver, featuring mission-based levels in which you must evade police and execute difficult maneuvers to collect rewards.

The game features a heavily revamped engine from the last Need for Speed, the realism furthered by such features as a visible poly-based driver, vehicle damage and variant weather conditions. Though some fine-tuning is definitely in order, it shows a great deal of promise and should fill any void felt by racing fans disappointed by GT2's Porsche-lessness.

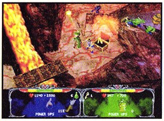


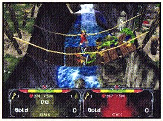


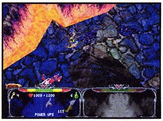
From a Scottish harbor (top) to a U.S. canyon (bottom), there's up to 40 total racing segments.

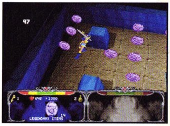
Gauntlet Legends

Theme: Action
# of Players: 1-2
Availability: March 2000
Developer: Midway
Publisher: Midway
URL: www.midway.com









Discover hidden areas to collect useful items in timed bonus games like this one.

After nearly a year of delays, Midway is finally nearing completion of Gauntlet Legends, a port of the arcade game that resurrected one of the 1980s' most popular franchises. Just as in the coin-op, the PlayStation version promises plenty of fast-paced action as your Warrior, Valkyrie, Wizard or Archer utilizes a limitless supply of projectile weapons en route to collecting the Rune Stones and defeating the demonic Skorne. The game borrows RPG elements like experience points for gaining levels and gold for purchasing items.

While very similar to the arcade version, the PS release features a few subtle differences. Most notably, Midway was forced to limit multiplayer to two in order to maintain a constant 30 frames per second (still considerably slower than the arcade, yet about all your PS can handle). Which is not to say that you won't encounter a steady flow of enemies in your 20-plus hours of gameplay; if you fail to destroy the generators that spawn them, don't expect to move along very quickly.

Overall presentation differs as well. Instead of being able to choose any of the seven kingdoms from the start (three more than the arcade), you must first earn access by beating each sublevel and touching those tricky-to-find obelisks. The layout of the levels themselves resembles what you might have seen before, but the PS's limitations change their looks considerably. Similarly, the turbo and magic attacks found in the coin-op are much less grandiose in execution, yet just as effective in obliterating opposition.

Many fans of the arcade game have waited a long time to be able play Gauntlet Legends at home. Find out if it was worth the wait in next month's issue.

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Issue 1–$15

PlayStation
Ghost in the Shell
Final Fantasy VII

☐ October 1997

Ghost in the Shell, Final Fantasy VII Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: Intelligent Qube, PaRappa the Rapper, Ace Combat 2, Fighting Force non-playables: Tomb Raider II, NFL GameDay 98

Issue 2–$10

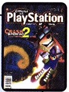
PlayStation

☐ November 1997

PaRappa the Rapper
Bushido Blade Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: Crash Bandicoot 2, Croc, Armored Core, Madden NFL 98, Cool Boarders 2, Colony Wars non-playables: NHL FaceOff 98, Ghost in the Shell

Issue 3– $10



☐ December 1997

Cool Boarders Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: Bushido Blade, Vs., Star Wars: Masters of Teräs Kåsi, Jet Moto 2, Cardinal SYN, Ghost in the Shell, Moto Racer, Test Drive 4 non-playable: One

Issue 4–$10

PlayStation
Resident Evil 2

☐ January 1998

Resident Evil 2 Feature
Tomb Raider II Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: NFL GameDay 98, CART World Series, Frogger non-playables: Spawn, Final Fantasy Tactics, Pandemonium 2, Gex 2

Issue 5–$10

PlayStation
Dead or Alive

☐ February 1998

Dead or Alive Feature
1997 *OPM* Editors' Awards

Demo Disc includes: playables: NCAA GameBreaker 98, Tomb Raider II, Command & Conquer: Red Alert, Crime Killer non-playables: Pitfall 3D, Resident Evil 2, Vigilante 8, Monster Rancher

Issue 6–$7.99

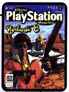
PlayStation
06

☐ March 1998

Demo Disc Only!

playables: Bloody Roar, Monster Rancher, Shipwreckers non-playables: Alundra, NBA Shoot Out 98, Saga Frontier, Mega Man Neo

Issue 7–$10



☐ April 1998

10 Overlooked PS Picks
Resident Evil 2 Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: Hot Shots Golf, Pitfall 3D, WCW Nitro, ONE non-playables: Blasto, The Granstream Saga

Issue 8–$10

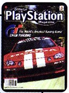
PlayStation
Tekken 3

☐ May 1998

10 Greatest PS Fighters
Tekken 3 Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: Einhänder, Gex: Enter the Gecko, Klonoa non-playables: Dead or Alive, Gran Turismo

Issue 9–$15



☐ June 1998

Metal Gear Solid Preview
Gran Turismo Review

Demo Disc includes: playables: Cardinal SYN, Vigilante 8, Forsaken, N2O, TOCA, Dead or Alive non-playables: Tomba, Jersey Devil

Issue 10–$7.99

PlayStation
10

☐ July 1998

Demo Disc Only!

playables: Gran Turismo, Tomba!, The Granstream Saga, Jersey Devil, NBA Shoot Out, Blasto, Speed Racer non-playables: NFL Xtreme, MLB 99, Tekken 3

Issue 11–$15

PlayStation
Metal Gear Solid

☐ August 1998

Metal Gear Solid
Vigilante 8 Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: Tekken 3, Turbo Prop Racing non-playables: Duke Nukem: Time to Kill, Lunar: Silver Star Story, Ninja: Shadow of Darkness, Metal Gear Solid

Issue 12–$10

PlayStation
Parasite Eve

☐ September 1998

PlayStation's Birthday
Elemental Gearbolt Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: Spyro the Dragon, Duke Nukem: Time to Kill, WWF War Zone, The Unholy War, S.C.A.R.S. non-playables: Metal Gear Solid, Rival Schools, Test Drive 5

Volume 2 Issue 1–$10

PlayStation
Spyro the Dragon

☐ October 1998

Spyro the Dragon Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: Metal Gear Solid, Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver, Test Drive 5, Devil Dice, Brunswick Bowling, Ninja, NFL Xtreme, Cool Boarders 3 non-playables: Parasite Eve, Rival Schools, NFL GameDay 99

Volume 2 Issue 2–$7.99

PlayStation
14

☐ November 1998

Demo Disc Only!

playables: MediEvil, WarGames Defcon 1, Dragon Seeds, G-Darius, Future Cop L.A.P.D., Colony Wars Vengeance non-playables: Crash Bandicoot: WARPED, Tenchu, Tai-Fu, Rugrats, Abe's Exoddus, Brave Fencer Musashi, You Don't Know Jack

Volume 2 Issue 3–$10

PlayStation
Warped Speed Ahead

☐ December 1998

Metal Gear Solid
Crash Bandicoot Strategy
Demo Disc includes: playables: Tomb Raider III, Crash Bandicoot: WARPED, Bomberman World, A Bug's Life, Running Wild, Invasion From Beyond, Kagero: Deception II, Metal Gear Solid, Gran Turismo, non-playables: Silent Hill, Knockout Kings, Big Air

Volume 2 Issue 4–$10

PlayStation
Gex

☐ January 1999

Gex Deep Cover Gecko
Tomb Raider III Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: Silent Hill, Moto Racer 2, Brave Fencer Musashi, Apocalypse, T'ai Fu non-playables: Rugrats, Test Drive: Off–Road 2

Volume 2 Issue 6–$10

PlayStation
35
Silent Hill

☐ March 1999

PlayStation Dictionary
Syphon Filter Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: Syphon Filter, Bust A Groove, Shadow Madness, Fisherman's Bait, Akuji the Heartless, No One Can Stop Mr. Domino, Street Sk8er non-playables: NCAA Final Four '99, Guardian's Crusade

Volume 2 Issue 7–$10

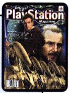
PlayStation 2 Breaking News!
PlayStation
Role Playing Game
13 New RPGs

☐ April 1999

The Year of the RPG
Silent Hill Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: R4: Ridge Racer Type 4, WCW/nWo Thunder, Rollcage, Warzone 2100, Rugrats: Search for Reptar
non-playables: Legend of Legaia

Volume 2 Issue 8–$10



☐ May 1999

Star Wars: Episode I–The Phantom Menace Feature
Legend of Legaia Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: Ehrgeiz, Gex 3: Deep Cover Gecko, Legend of Legaia, Contender non-playables: 3Xtreme, Centipede, Driver, G Police 2, Gauntlet Legends

Volume 2 Issue 9–$10

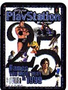
PlayStation
Resident Evil 3 Nemesis
40

☐ June 1999

Resident Evil 3 Nemesis
Gex 3: Deep Cover Gecko Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: Oddworld: Abe's Exoddus, NFL Blitz, Bust-a-Move 4, R4: Ridge Racer Type 4, Elmo's Letter Adventure non-playables: Star Ocean: The Second Story, Bloody Roar 2, MLB 2000, Jade Cocoon, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater

Volume 2 Issue 10–$10



☐ July 1999

25 Games You Must Play
Street Fighter Alpha 3 Strategy
Demo Disc includes: playables: Ape Escape, MLB 2000, The Next Tetris, Tony Hawk's Pro Skater, Interplay Sports Baseball 2000, Croc 2, Soul of the Samurai, Bloody Roar 2 non-playables: Jet Moto 3, Xena: Warrior Princess, Macross VFX 2, Street Fighter Alpha 3

Volume 2 Issue 11–$10

PlayStation
Tarzan
Ape Escape

☐ August 1999

Tarzan Lord of the Console
Ape Escape Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: Final Fantasy VIII, 3 Xtreme, Tiny Tank, Jade Cocoon, Macross VF-X 2, You Don't Know Jack, Centipede, Ultimate 8-Ball non-playables: Shao Lin, NFL GameDay 2000, NFL Xtreme 2

Volume 2 Issue 12–$10

PlayStation
Final Fantasy VIII

☐ September 1999

EA sports vs. 989 studios
Jade Cocoon Strategy

Demo Disc includes: playables: UmJammer Lammy, Sled Storm, Chocobo Racing, Pong, Monaco Gran Prix Racing non-playables: NFL GameDay 2000, NCAA Gamebreaker 2000, Vigilante 8: Second Offense, Thrasher, Toy Story 2

Volume 3 Issue 1–$10

PlayStation
Spyro 2
50

☐ October 1999

Final Fantasy VIII Strategy
Demo Disc includes: playables: Metal Gear Solid: VR Missions, WipeOut 3, Omega Boost, NFL Xtreme 2, Jet Moto 3, Championship Motocross, Toy Story 2, Bugs Bunny, Pac-Man World non-playables: Rugrats, Countdown Vampires, Wu-Tang, Fighting Force 2, NHL FaceOff 2000, Medal of Honor, NBA Shootout 2000, Hot Wheels Turbo Racing

Volume 3 Issue 2–$10

PlayStation

☐ November 1999

Tomb Raider 4
Crash Team Racing Strategy
Demo Disc includes: playables: Grandia, Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver, Killer Loop, 40 Winks, NFL Blitz, Crash Bandicoot: WARPED, Cool Boarders 3 non-playables: Fear Effect, SuperCross Circuit, Demolition Racer, Kingsley's Quest, G-Police: Weapons of Justice

Volume 3 Issue 3–$10

PlayStation
60 Games Reviewed
Dino Crisis Strategy

☐ December 1999

PlayStation 2
Dino Crisis Strategy
Demo Disc includes: playables: Gran Turismo 2, Thrasher: Skate and Destroy, Test Drive Off-Road 3, Madden NFL 2000, NFL GameDay 2000, NCAA GameBreaker 2000, Cool Boarders 4, Demolition Racer non-playables: MTV Sports: Snowboarding, Twisted Metal 4, NCAA Final Four 2000

Volume 3 Issue 4–$10

PlayStation
2
Full Scoop

☐ January 2000

End of the World Buyers Guide
Resident Evil 3 Strategy
Demo Disc includes: playables: Dino Crisis, NHL FaceOff 2000, NBA Basketball 2000, Tarzan, Army Men: Air Attack, WCW Mayhem non-playables: Tomb Raider: The Last Revelation, International Track & Field 2000

Volume 3 Issue 5–$10

PlayStation
Smack Down

☐ February 2000

Wrestling Roundup
Medal of Honor Strategy
Demo Disc includes: playables: Tomba! 2: The Evil Swine Return, Tomb Raider The Last Revelation, SuperCross Circuit, MTV Sports Snowboarding, Ballistic, International Track & Field 2000
non-playables: Medal of Honor, Hot Shots Golf 2

Volume 3 Issue 6–$10

PlayStation
Syphon Filter 2

☐ March 2000

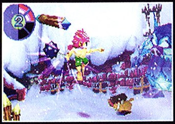
Wrestling Roundup
Medal of Honor Strategy
Demo Disc includes: playables: Syphon Filter 2, Crash Team Racing, NCAA Final Four 2000, Spyro 2, Silent Bomber, Twisted Metal 4, MTV Music Generator, Ace Combat 3: Electrosphere
non-playables: Test Drive Cycles, Vigilante 8: 2nd Offense, Alundra 2

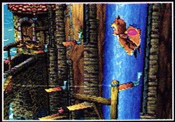
PlayStation
EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB
Comic Mischief
WhoopeeCamp

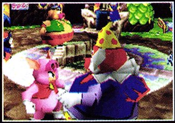
Tomba! is a trademark of WHOOPEE CAMP® Co. Ltd. ©1999 WHOOPEE CAMP Co. Ltd. PlayStation and the PlayStation

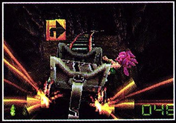
TOMBA! 2
THE EVIL SWINE RETURN

JUST BECAUSE YOU'VE GOT THE HAIR, DOESN'T MEAN YOU'VE GOT THE POWER.


TOMBA PUTS THE GIANT HAM ON ICE.


FLYING SUITS. STYLISH YET FUNCTIONAL.


TOMBA GOES COVERT WITH A PIG SUIT.


BEAT THE CLOCK. JUMP THE TROLLEY.

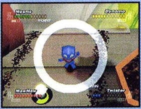
SORRY, TOUGH GUY. BUT THERE'S ONLY ONE TOMBA. AND HE'S ON HIS WILDEST ADVENTURE YET.

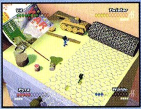
WWW.PLAYSTATION.COM

logos are registered trademar f Sony Comput Entertainment Inc.

Micro Maniacs

Codemasters have abandoned tiny vehicles in favor of a freakish footrace in the spiritual successor to its Micro Machines series. Choose among 12 wee creatures (four of which have to be unlocked), all with different weapons and power-ups. Jumping plays a prominent role in the races, with plenty of obstacles that you'll have to vault over. There are 40 different tracks, including a handful of vehicle-based levels!

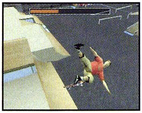


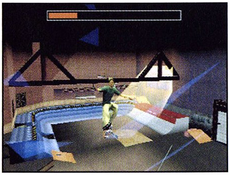


Theme Racing **Publisher** Codemasters
# of Players 1-8 **Developer** Codemasters
URL: www.codemastersusa.com

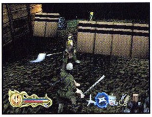
Grind Session

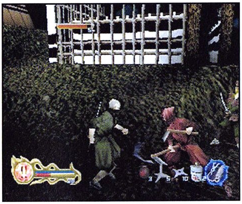
Ever since that little title starring Tony Hawk, skating games have become all the rage. Sony's entry into the genre, Grind Session, offers even more tricks than the aforementioned bestseller, to be performed by 10 real-life riders such as Willie Santos and Pigpen. It sports customizable gear by name brands like Vans and includes eight unique arenas great for scuffing knees. Join a friend for six multiplayer modes, and rock out to Sonic Youth, KRS-One and other known artists.

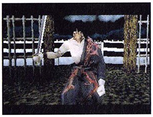




Theme Sports **Publisher** Sony CEA
# of Players 1-2 **Developer** Shaba Games
URL: www.playstation.com

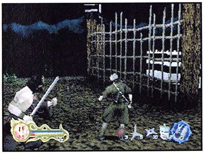






Tenchu 2

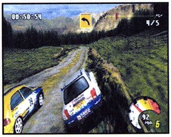
Activision's long-awaited prequel to Tenchu follows the path of two ninjas on a quest of vengeance. Through 29 missions, battle it out with other martial arts masters, using stealth for a lethal sneak attack whenever possible. You now also have the ability to swim, destroy grenade-filled boxes, or even move dead bodies to conceal evidence.



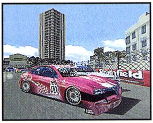
Theme Action **Publisher** Activision
# of Players 1 **Developer** Acquire
URL: www.activision.com

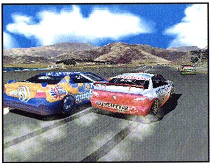
Mobil 1 Rally Championship

With over 420 miles of road replicating all 36 stages of the Official British Rally Championship, this upcoming EA release promises the largest rally driving environment ever. Race more than 20 licensed cars across roads of mud, snow, gravel and dirt, complete with variant weather conditions and car damage. Co-pilots warn you of upcoming turns as you race your way to the trophy.



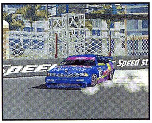
Theme Racing **Publisher** Electronic Arts
# of Players 1-2 **Developer** Hot Gen
URL: www.ea.com





WTC, World Racing Championship

Gran Turismo 2 may be the undisputed racing champ, but WTC looks like it could give Sony's masterpiece a real run for its money. With 23 actual tracks from around the globe, 42 licensed cars (including Audis, Beemers and Alfa Romeos), no pop-up, visible vehicle damage, and realistic close-pack racing, WTC has a lot to offer for racing fans in need of a speed fix.

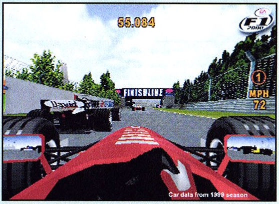


Theme Racing **Publisher** Codemasters
# of Players 1-2 **Developer** Codemasters
URL: www.codemastersusa.com

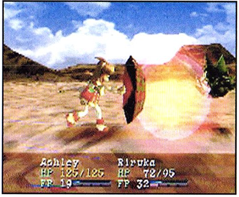
F1 2000

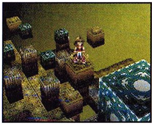
Race through the new millennium in style with EA's F1 2000. The game includes every race run during Y2K, allowing players to follow along and try to match the performances of their favorite drivers. You can also tune up your vehicle for optimal race-day performance.

REPLAY
EA SPORTS
EXIT
WORK IN PROGRESS 1999 SEASON DATA



Theme Racing	**Publisher** Electronic Arts
# of Players 1-2	**Developer** Visual Sciences
URL: www.ea.com	



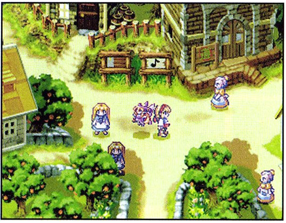


Ashley
HP 63/100
FP 48

Wild Arms 2

It's been three years since the first Wild Arms was released, and its upcoming sequel promises all of the improvements you might expect. Thanks to a new graphics engine, the characters now traverse a completely 3D world with full polygonal treatment. You can also control the camera to your liking as you explore the various towns, maps and dungeons. There are three separate beginnings to the story, depending on which uniquely able hero you choose to lead your crusade. Look for it in May.

Theme RPG	**Publisher** Sony CEA
# of Players 1	**Developer** Contrail
URL: www.playstation.com	



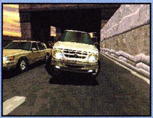
Theme RPG	**Publisher** Atlus
# of Players 1	**Developer** Nippon Ichi
URL: www.atlus.com	

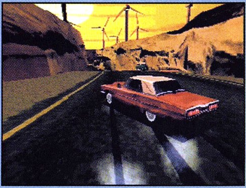
Rhapsody

Odds are you've saved the princess in an RPG or two...but have you ever saved the prince? Rhapsody, a unique entry to the genre featuring hand-drawn anime characters who sing and dance at key moments in the story, centers around the young Cornet's quest to save Prince Ferdinand, her true love. Its humorous magic spells and Pokémon-esque puppet and monster collection could keep young gamers very happy.

Vanishing Point

Vanishing Point features tons of licensed vehicles, from SUVs to classic muscle cars, and allows you to perform high-flying stunts as you speed through the streets. The game also utilizes an advanced graphics engine that's said to eliminate polygon pop-up.

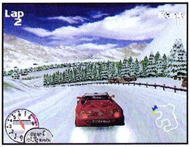


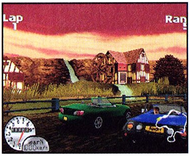


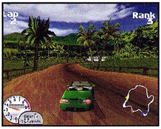
Theme Racing	**Publisher** Acclaim
# of Players 1-2	**Developer** Clockwork Games
URL: www.acclaim.com	

Roadsters

There's something special about a convertible car—the thrill of driving with the top down, wind blowing through your hair... Titus is hoping to capture that excitement in its forthcoming racing game, Roadsters. Slide behind the wheel of some of the snazziest cars, including Jaguars and Fiats, and speed through a variety of themed tracks on your way to earning the highly prized Roadster Trophy.





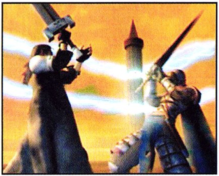


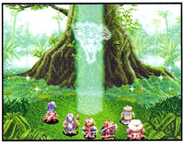
Theme Racing	**Publisher** Titus
# of Players 1-2	**Developer** Smart Dog

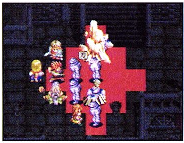
URL: www.titusgames.com

Arc the Lad Collection

Hot on the heels of its critically praised Lunar localization, Working Designs is bringing to the U.S. all three chapters in the Arc the Lad Saga, complete with plenty of extras like a remixed soundtrack CD and a "making of" CD. The three games were released separately in Japan but will be packaged together and released in November of this year.


Arc the Lad 3


Arc the Lad 1

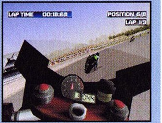

Arc the Lad 2

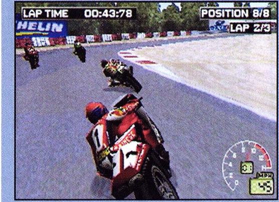
Theme RPG	**Publisher** Working Designs
# of Players 1	**Developer** Sony CEI

URL: www.workingdesigns.com

Superbike 2000

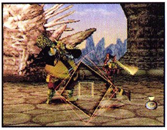
EA's first Superbike PlayStation release features 20 motion-captured riders programmed to respond appropriately to any situation across 13 circuits of racing. You can rev it up this spring.

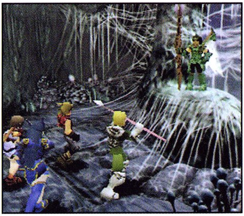


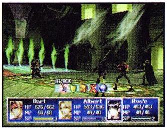


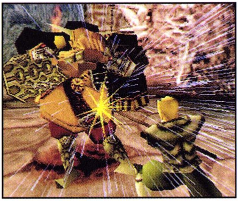
Theme Racing	**Publisher** Electronic Arts
# of Players 1-2	**Developer** Milestone

URL: www.ea.com









Legend of Dragoon

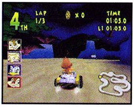
Sony's upcoming RPG boasts a deep story, amazing graphics and over 80 hours of gameplay. Nine uniquely talented humans combine with the spiritual forces of the Dragoon as they fight for freedom in an oppressive world. Count on more info soon.

Theme RPG	**Publisher** Sony CEA
# of Players 1	**Developer** Sony CEA

URL: www.playstation.com

WDW: Magical Racing Quest

If you've ever wished upon a star to race through Walt Disney World's attractions as a Disney character, then what your heart desires will come to you this March. Zoom through the likes of Space Mountain as you speed to the finish line—or even duel it out in arena battle mode!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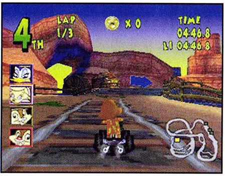
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TIME
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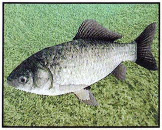
L1 04:46.8

Theme Racing **Publisher** Eidos
# of Players 1-2 **Developer** Crystal Dynamics
URL: www.eidos.com

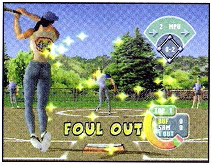
Reel Fishing II

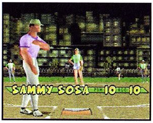
Real men looking for realistic fishing would do real well to consider Reel Fishing II. The game boasts more than 50 different real fresh and salt water fish as well as 500 different pieces of tackle equipment—man, that's a real lot. Sounds like real reel fun!



Theme Sports **Publisher** Natsume
# of Players 1 **Developer** Victor
URL: www.natsume.com

Sammy Sosa Softball Slam


FOUL OUT
2 MPH


SAMMY SOSA
10
10

When he's not belting homers at Wrigley Field, Sammy Sosa is just an average Joe slugging away at slow underhand pitches before crowds you can count on one hand...or so 3DO would have us believe. The Cub all-star's Softball Slam brings us a variety of humorous male, female and co-ed teams along with much of what you might experience yourself in an amateur league—horribly off-line throws, cringing fielders and beer-bellied teammates are included. To further the realism, you can even re-create your real-life team with the player editor.

Theme Sports **Publisher** 3DO
# of Players 1-2 **Developer** 3DO
URL: www.3do.com

Test Drive Le Mans

This speedy racing game features more than 50 cars to compete across eight tracks at any time of day. Establish your team as the best of 25 as you attempt to endure the continuous 24-hour mode (abbreviated for those who value sleep).

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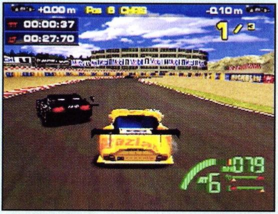
7 Kremer LMP1
Pilot LMP1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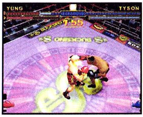
6

Theme Racing **Publisher** Infogrames
# of Players 1-2 **Developer** Eutechnyx
URL: www.infogrames.com

MIKE TYSON
VS
RAB MCCABE
FIGHT RESULTS
THE WINNER IS MIKE TYSON
TYSON
MCCABE
23% HIT RATE
17 PUNCHES THROWN 8
25% HIT RATE
PRESS ⓧ TO CONTINUE


YUNG
TYSON
1:55

TYSON
MILLER
1:52

TYSON
MILLER
KO
1:44

Mike Tyson Boxing

Don't expect any wacky antics in Codemasters' forthcoming punch-fest; Mike Tyson Boxing is pure sim, with a deep, detailed career mode starring none other than Tyson himself as your adviser. Or you can play as Iron Mike and attempt to unify the belts in Showcase mode.

Theme Sports **Publisher** Codemasters
# of Players 1-2 **Developer** Codemasters
URL: www.codemastersusa.com

Johnny!
Come liberate
me! Love
Ethel
DEAR JOHNNY,
NEXT TIME YOU'RE
IN A FOXHOLE, THINK
OF ME...
LOVE ALWAYS,
BLANCHE
Johnny,
I miss your
plastic fantastic!
Call me...
Love, Agnes
FOLLOW-UP TO
AWARD
WINNING
ARMY MEN™ 3D
TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB
Animated Violence
PlayStation

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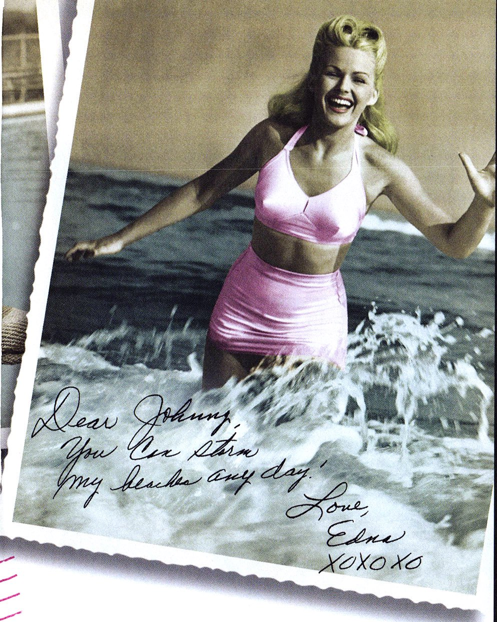
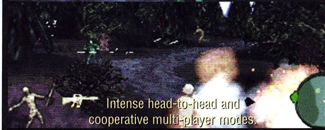


Dear Johnny,
You can storm
my beaches any day!
Love,
Edna
XOXOXO

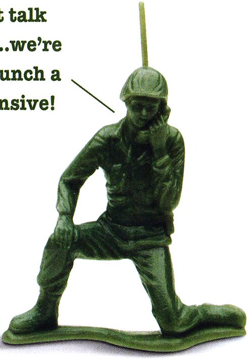
WWII-based tactical action with 20 missions covering 6 terrains.

All-new game engine vividly recreates the pain of battle.



Intense head-to-head and cooperative multi-player modes.

Edna? How'd you get this number? No! I can't talk right now...we're about to launch a major offensive!



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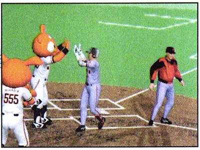
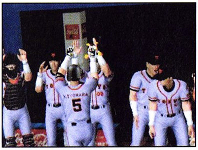
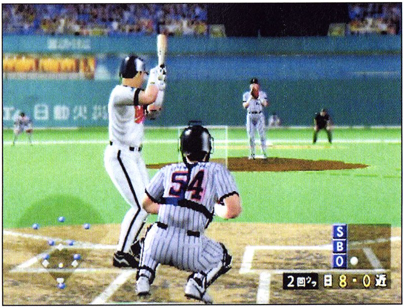
Gekikuukan Pro Baseball

Square. Baseball. At first glance, the two don't seem to go together—but then we saw these incredibly detailed and lifelike screens of the game in action. Everything from the swing of the bat to the movements of the fielders to the antics of a team's mascot is represented here. All Star Pro Baseball also includes extra animations that follow the plays, giving the game a TV-style presentation. Currently, the game features actual teams from the Japan Baseball League, as well as voices from the athletes and Japanese sportscasters; we're hoping to see this same game brought to the U.S. with a Major League Baseball license. From the looks of it, Square has created a baseball engine that would rival anything from the sports experts like Electronic Arts and 989 Sports. All Star Pro Baseball is scheduled to release in Japan in late March.



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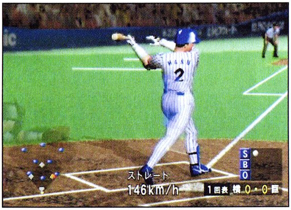
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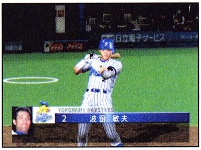
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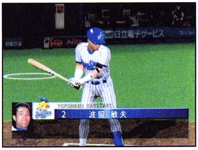
2 波留 敏夫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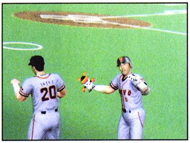
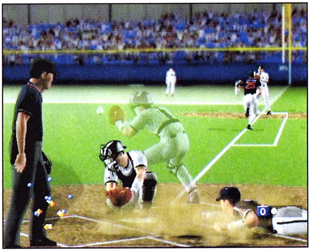
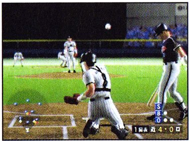
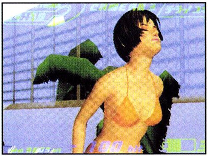


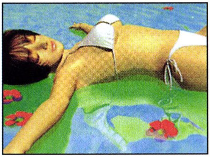


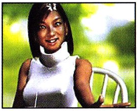


Primal Image

The frontrunner for the most deliciously creepy game on the PS2 is definitely Atlus' Primal Image. You're a "photographer" who snaps pics of CG girls. Better pics net you more points, which in turn allows you to position the girls in new poses. The models are programmed to move like actual people, so don't try anything too funny—otherwise she might complain. Now if only someone would make a one-handed controller for the PS2...

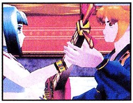


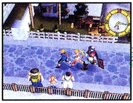


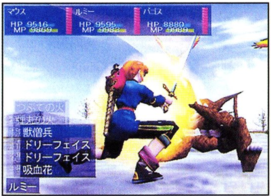


Reiselied

What's a PlayStation game doing in the PS2 gallery? Hah! We wondered the same thing—until we realized this is actually Konami's forthcoming PS2 RPG, Reiselied: Ephemeral Fantasia. Originally planned for the Dreamcast, Reiselied doesn't look like it'll push the PS2 to the limits—but then again, Konami's Suikoden series was no technical masterpiece on the PlayStation, and it was still a heck of a lot of fun. The game will release this spring in Japan.



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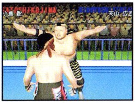
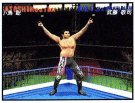
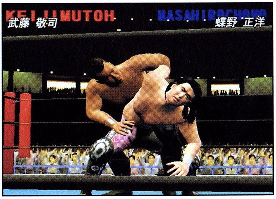
ドリーフェイス
ドリーフェイス
吸血花
ルミー

All Star Pro Wrestling

If we didn't already know that Square is working on two more chapters in the Final Fantasy series for the PS2, we might not have been able to forgive them for spending their precious resources on a wrestling game. All Star Pro Wrestling will feature realistic body-muscle movements (that is, for a wrestling game) and detailed facial expressions. The game is set to release this spring in Japan; no word on whether it'll make its way Stateside.



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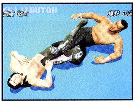
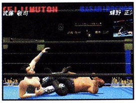
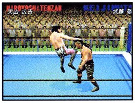
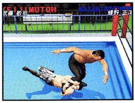
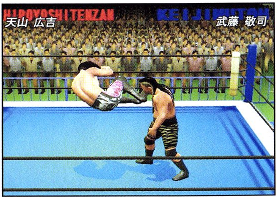
MASAHIRO CHONO
蝶野 正洋





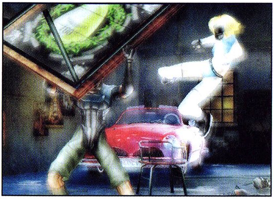


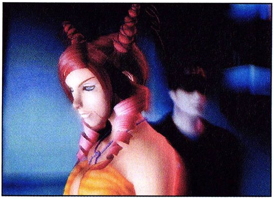


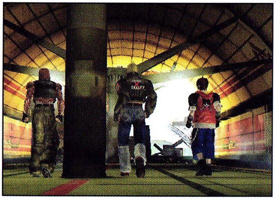

HIROYOSHI TENZAN
天山 広吉
KEIJI MUTOH
武藤 敬司

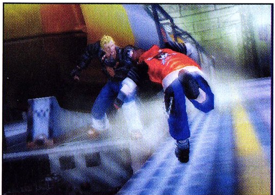
The Bouncer

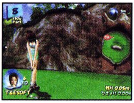
You've seen 'em before, but now you get to see them again, this time in high-resolution. Developed by Dream Factory and published by Square, The Bouncer looks like it may be a real showcase title for the PlayStation2.

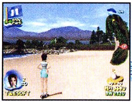


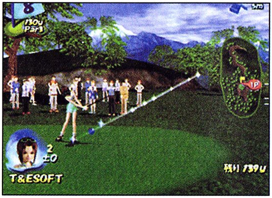










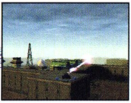


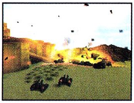
Golf Paradise

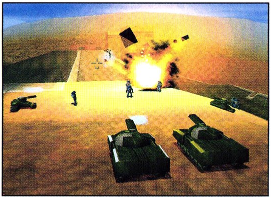
From what we've seen of T&E Soft's Golf Paradise, the game has that same mixture of cartoony graphics and realistic gameplay that made Hot Shots Golf such a hit. Golf Paradise is also one of the only—if not *the* only—four-player PS2 title at the Japanese launch. (Good thing Sony's got that new multi-tap!) Golf Paradise features six playable characters and a wide variety of exotic courses.

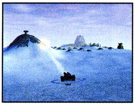
War Monkeys

Real-time strategies have always been better on PCs than on consoles, but that may change due the PS2's processing power. We're told that War Monkeys' engine can display as many as 200 units onscreen and can show battlefields as big as 25 kilometers. Developed by Silicon Dreams, War Monkeys takes place in 2161 on a planet named Primus IV, and features the voice work of Charleston Heston.



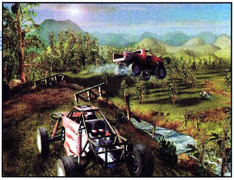


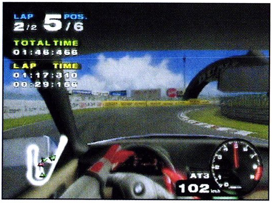


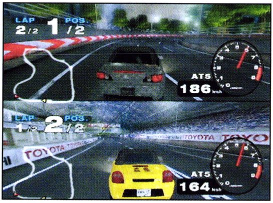


Getaway

Screenshot or concept art? You decide—either way it gives you a good idea of what Rockstar is shooting for with this new driving title. Developed by Angel Studios, Getaway sets you in open environments that you have to race through in order to smuggle contraband while avoiding cops and other enemies. Look for it this fall.





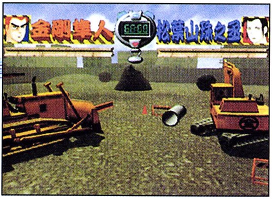


Driving Emotion Type-S

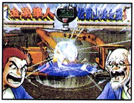
CAR SELECT
RX-7 TYPE RS

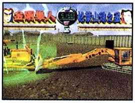
We recently got some hands-on time with Square's racing title, and while the control was somewhat slippery, the game looked fabulous. The in-car view is simply stunning—although probably utterly useless for the vast majority of gamers. Let's hope Square can tighten up the control a bit before its release.

Buchigire Kongou



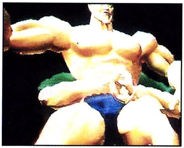
Leave it to Artdink—the minds behind such PlayStation wonders as Tail of the Sun, Aquanauts Holiday and Mr. Domino—to come up with this one: Buchigire Kongou puts you in the role of construction workers who fight opponents using bulldozers, cranes and other pieces of heavy machinery. Are you man enough to handle your big machine? Can you extend your crane and penetrate your enemies' defenses? Well, can you?

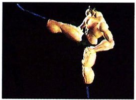




Baki the Grappler

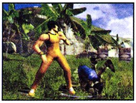
Here's a little something for the ladies: Tomy's wrestling game for the PS2, based on a Japanese manga of the same name, featuring some delightful beefcakes in questionable poses.

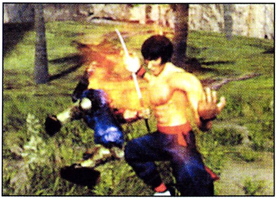


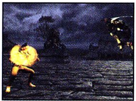


Tekken Tag Tournament

No longer a launch title, Tekken Tag Tournament is now set to release on March 30. (At least that's not *too long* of a wait.) Until then here are a few new screens from Namco's flagship fighting title showing different characters and levels. Finally, we get to see the armor-clad Yoshimitsu as well as everyone's favorite Bruce Lee clone, Marshall Law. We also hear that TTT may support four players at once.

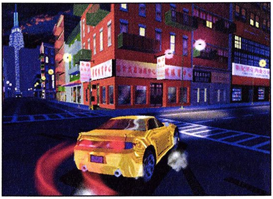






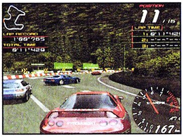
Midnight Club: Street Racing

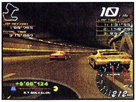
Rockstar and Angel Studios are combining their efforts for another risque driving game. Focusing on illegal street racing, MC:SR puts you behind the wheel of souped-up cars, seeking challenges from other members of the "Midnight Club." When encountered, you can race through the streets of actual cities at breakneck speeds. MC:SR is slated for a fall U.S. release.

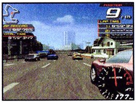


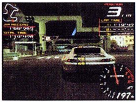
Ridge Racer V

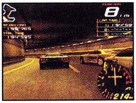
This month we got our hands on a few new gameplay shots of Namco's Ridge Racer V, and we're pleased to say they look almost as good as those replay shots that we've been featuring in these pages over the past several issues. We've also learned that RRV will supports a host of controllers, including the Dual Shock, Dual Shock2, JogCon and neGcon. It's no exaggeration to say that RRV may be the best game of the Japanese launch.





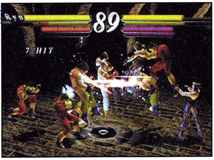


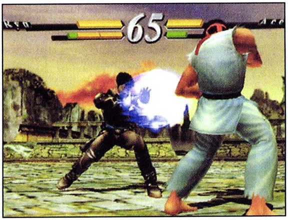


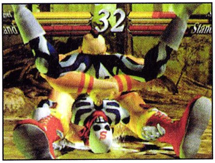


Street Fighter EX3

While Tekken Tag Tournament may be generating more buzz as a PS2 title, Street Fighter EX3 has a chance to steal TTT's thunder since it's now slated as a Japanese launch title. Capcom's game will include three-on-one battles and tag team melees, as well as a few new characters. Judging from these screens, Capcom may finally be able to capture that special 2D feeling in a 3D game.

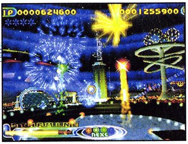


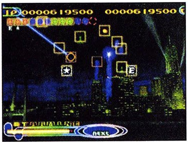




Fantavision

No, this isn't a sad attempt at re-creating the millennium festivities on your PS2; rather, this is a new puzzle game from Sony Computer Entertainment. Slated to be a Japanese launch title, Fantavision's gameplay is reminiscent of Missile Command, but in this case you'll be battling against fireworks instead of nuclear disarmament. And while it may not appear so from these screens, Fantavision apparently greatly exploits some of the PS2's graphical capabilities—each firework is created using hundreds of particles. You can also alter the camera angles when you replay your games.





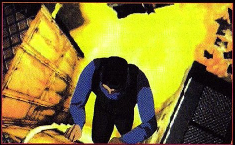
PlayStation

MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY
ESRB

Symptoms of Fear:
Perspiration
Dilation of Pupils
Trembling
Nausea
Loss of Appetite

Remember, the only thing to fear is fear itself. Especially in this deadly mercenary mission where your own emotional responses determine what happens next. So go ahead, make your move. Just be sure to keep your fear in check.

Breakthrough **SUSPENSE/ACTION ADVENTURE** game. Beyond your realm of fear. Beyond any 3rd person game created.



MOTION FX TECHNOLOGY. Pre-rendered, fully animated backgrounds creating a frighteningly real world.

NON-INTERRUPTED GAMEPLAY for more intense action and debilitating power. Comes in handy for the **THREE RUTHLESS MERCENARIES** whose destinies you control.

fear effect

It can recognize your fear. Can you?

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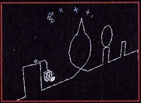
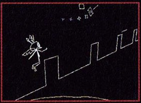
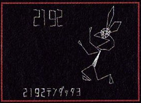
Vib Ribbon

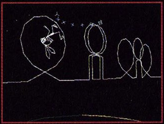
Sony CEI, Now

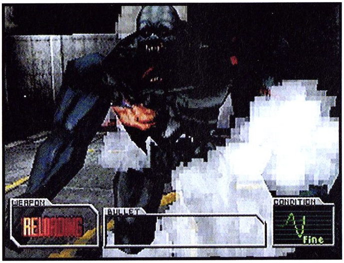
The latest from PaRappa developer Nanaonsha is this even more quirky and bizarre music-themed game called Vib Ribbon. Presented completely in vector graphics (the straight lines old arcade games like Tempest used), Vib Ribbon has you negotiate a series of obstacles that fly at you in time to the music with prescribed button presses. For example, push R1 just before a loop to slide around it, or triangle right as your character approaches a pit to step over. Sound simple? The idea may be, but when up to eight different obstacles are flying at you at different speeds, all requiring certain button combos, it quickly becomes a big pain in the ass. The best part of Vib, though, would have to be the music—a collection of infectiously bizarre J-pop that will have you laughing at how ridiculous it sounds one minute and humming along the next. And if you ever get tired of the soundtrack, you can pop in your own CDs to play along with instead.

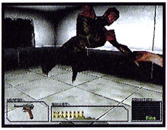


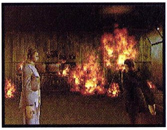












Biohazard: Gun Survivor

Capcom

In case you missed our coverage a few months back, Gun Survivor is Capcom's new off-rails light gun game (although you can use the Dual Shock if you prefer) set in the Biohazard universe (Resident Evil in the U.S.). By using the A and B buttons on either side of the GunCon to turn and shooting offscreen to walk, run and move backward, Gun Survivor lets you wander around freely, like in a first-person shooter. Picking up and using keys, herbs and other staple Resident Evil items is handled simply by bumping into the object you want to take or operate. There are seven different guns you can find, including perennial favorites like the grenade launcher, shotgun and good ol' magnum. One item you won't find, however, are the ink ribbons—Gun Survivor allows you four continues but you cannot save at any point during the game. The save option only appears once your game is over, and loaded games always start you back at the beginning, but with all the guns and ammo you had in your save file.

Story-wise, Gun Survivor takes place after Resident Evil 3 and doesn't star any of the major RE characters, although it does make reference to them in a couple spots. The game opens with you awakening from a helicopter crash with amnesia; and you have to piece together clues both to figure out who you are and also where all the deadly monsters came from. (Gosh, you think Umbrella could be involved? Naaaaaaaaah!)

There is some technique to the gameplay—shooting enemies in the head kills them faster, and hitting them during certain frames of animation will stop their attacks—but in most ways Gun Survivor is sadly lacking. Monsters don't react to being shot in specific areas—you can't blow off a head, shoot off an arm, or take out zombies' legs like in the other Resident Evil titles, despite the fact that you can now aim more precisely than ever. The graphics don't fare too well either, with sparse environments and pixely visuals including erratic and severe slowdown. But perhaps the most annoying feature is the fact that the game auto-centers the screen on whatever enemy you shoot and tries to track it as it moves; not only is the herky-jerky motion disorienting but it defeats the purpose of a light gun game in the first place.

B:GS is still scheduled to be released stateside this fall as Resident Evil: Survivor, probably with the light gun support removed altogether. Hopefully Capcom can do some major retooling between now and then to fix up this very disappointing addition to their flagship series.

WEAPON
BULLET
CONDITION
Fine

Theme	Action	# of Players	1
Availability	Now	Developer	Capcom

Fear is a powerful motivator.
That and coming in second.

ALFA ROMEO
ASTON MARTIN
AUDI
BMW
CHEVROLET
CITROEN
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DODGE
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HONDA
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LISTER
LOTUS
MAZDA
MERCEDES-BENZ
MG
MINI
MITSUBISHI
NISSAN
OPEL
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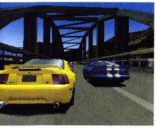
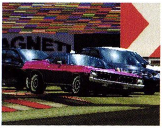
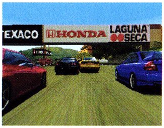
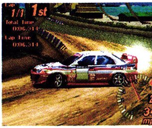






GT2
GRAN TURISMO
RACING. ON A HIGHER LEVEL.



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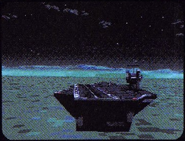
• 001

search

- You're in the Kill Zone. Engage in maximum dogfighting action. Climb in the cockpit of 22 cutting-edge aircraft. Fly in 36 furious missions; air-to-air, air-to-ground, air-to-sea, even into the stratosphere.
- For the 1st time on the PlayStation® game console – Pilot your fighter during mid-air refueling or opt for the autopilot.

engage

• • 002



003 • • •

- Night Fight. Instrument Landing Systems and night carrier landings are all mission critical when you're dueling after dark.

Every hunter needs a nice gun rack.

destroy

- Lock and Load. The all-new 3D Virtual Cockpit mimics the exact movements of the pilot's head during combat, so the player never loses sight of the action.

004
GUN
406
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PlayStation

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ACTUAL IN-GAME SCREENSHOTS.

PREPARE TO BE

ASSIMILAT

By Kraig Kujawa
and Joe Rybicki
illustration by Tsuneo Sanda

ED

Captain Kirk's voyage was to be a five-year one; about as long as it has taken for the PlayStation to get its taste of Star Trek. But is it really worth the wait?

The sordid history of Trek games would answer that question with a resounding "No." After all, their lineage is about as prestigious as the last few seasons of UPN's *Voyager*. Now before all hope is lost, you should keep in mind that all of those recent Trek disappointments were computer games; perhaps the PlayStation has the warp core needed to turn the franchise around.

Laird Malamed, Brand Manager at Activision, recognizes that Trek games have disappointed fans of the hugely successful series, but is certain that Invasion won't suffer the same fate. "A lot of the complaints about Star Trek titles have related to the gameplay and game engines," says Malamed. "We spent a large portion of time working on the ship control, weapons and special effects. So before we even approached the Star Trek aspects, we had a great game to play. It was always a Trek game, but our mandate for all of our games is to have great gameplay first and foremost."

THE GENESIS DEVICE

To accomplish that, Activision handed the Invasion project to Warthog, a U.K.-based development team comprised of wily old space combat veterans, some of whom cut their teeth on Colony Wars, a Psygnosis franchise known for beautiful visuals but uneven game design. While some involved with Invasion will quietly tell you that the persons responsible for the design flaws in those Colony Wars games weren't brought on board, others in Warthog acknowledge that those previous titles served as invaluable lessons in Invasion's creation. "Less than half of the team are from Colony Wars, but people are always going to compare Invasion to it," explains Chris Graham, Senior Designer of Invasion. "You're constantly going to compare games of a similar genre if you've worked on more than one of that type. We continually think 'How could we do it better [than Colony Wars]?' or 'This didn't work on Colony Wars, so try something different.' It's helped mainly in the fact that we have done a game like Invasion before—just not this bloody good."

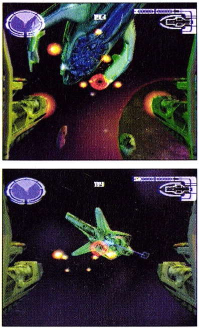
THE NEXT, NEXT GENERATION

We tend to agree with Graham's blunt analysis of his game as the unfinished version that we have already looks no less than incredible. Mission after mission manages to be visually impressive and interesting, despite the fact that the game is based on a current Star Trek universe that has been around for years. In fact, one of the surprising draws to Invasion is that it has a lot of things that you've never seen in the series. "We originally wanted to use the 'Species 8472', Jem'Hadar, and the Hirogen, but these were all rejected due to their place [relative to when Invasion takes place] in the Star Trek universe," explains Haydn Dalton, Invasion's Lead Designer. "Species and Hirogen came from *Voyager* and the Jem'Hadar were prominently *Deep Space Nine*." So the Invasion team was left to find an enemy that didn't conflict with the television series—so they resorted to creating one.

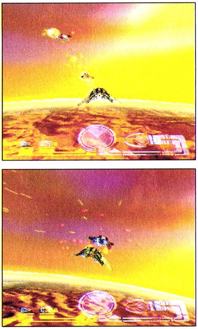
Invasion revolves around a mysterious rift caused by an aggressive alien race named the Kam'Jahtae bent on destabilizing the quadrant by provoking attacks between the Klingons, Romulans, Borg and Federation. The story, which we won't fully reveal, has plenty of twists, but we can say that Invasion includes an attack run on a Borg cube and a battle with one of your own Federation flagships. A whole new class of Kam'Jahtae vessels had to be created from scratch and then approved by Paramount, which sounds like a daunting task—especially given how protective most companies are regarding their treasured properties. "Initially I [felt handcuffed] by the license," says Dalton, "but as I continued to spec out the design I realized there is a lot more depth to Star Trek than meets the eye. Paramount has been great with Invasion. We wanted to bring Trek to a newer, younger age bracket and [Paramount] wants the same thing." That younger spin translated to a focus on fast-paced dog-fighting instead of players controlling the big, plodding starships standard to the PC titles (the closest you'll get to that is controlling their turrets). With that in mind, Invasion's designers went to the drawing board and created the heavily armed and nimble Valkyrie class of ships, which are the workhorses of the game.

ENGAGE!

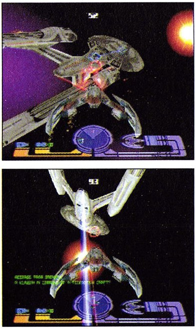
One of the most refreshing things about Invasion is the variety of mission objectives. Not content to be merely a space-based dogfighter, the game requires players to escort poorly armed medical ships, protect various allies, and even rescue escape pods from the grip of a black hole. Here are a few highlights:



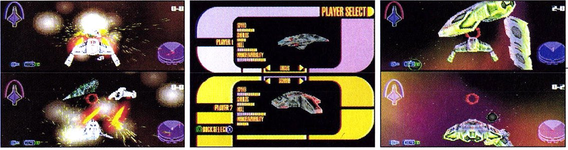
From time to time you'll be required to strap into the gunner's seat and blast away at enemies from the less maneuverable confines of the Typhon's turrets. Though you'll be armed with a rapid-firing, high-powered cannon and will have a full 180 degrees of motion, you'll find yourself exceptionally challenged by the need to track fast-moving vessels in three dimensions.



You'll also be sent into the upper atmosphere of a nearly barren planet in an attempt to initiate peaceful negotiations with the Kam'Jahtae. (As you might expect, these won't go precisely as hoped...) In addition to the huge world looming below the battlefield, your ships' maneuvering will be affected by the gravitational pull of the planet, altering play mechanics slightly.



Later in the game you will be required to pursue a Federation vessel. We won't reveal the details regarding how these circumstances come about (we wouldn't want to spoil it for you), but we can say that the prospect of flying against an immense Federation ship—especially one that bears such a close resemblance to the beloved Enterprise—is strangely exhilarating.


PLAYER SELECT
PLAYER 1
PLAYER 2
BACK SELECT

One huge improvement over Colony Wars is the addition of two-player combat. You can even add enemy ships to the mix.

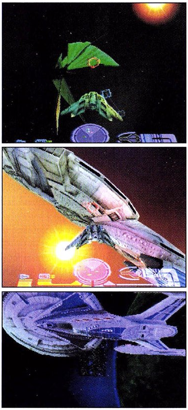
Han Randhava, Invasion's Lead Artist, compares the process of ship-crafting with Trek parameters to "walking down the aisle of a supermarket with a shopping trolley that has one wheel with a mind of its own. Down one side of the aisle is my natural design instinct, and on the other John Eaves' Star Trek design. Every now and again the trolley would veer toward my natural way of designing cool spacecraft, and then I'd have to steer hard to bring it back to middle ground." So if you think designing ships for the Star Trek universe would be a dream come true, think again. "It was tough," says Randhava, "especially the Valkyries and the U.S.S. Typhoon (the Red Squads' mothership), because they took some serious revisions. There are certain guidelines that we'd stick to because of that unique look the Star Trek universe has. To stay faithful to that was a task and a half. We could have taken the easy way and stuck to nice, safe designs we could easily get approved, but we were doing a concept involving fast dog-fighting spacecraft, which was unheard-of in the Star Trek universe."

> ***"To stay faithful to the look of the Star Trek universe was a task and a half."***
>
> ***—Han Randhava, Lead Artist***

The Valkyrie-I first appeared in *ST: Insurrection* and the Invasion team named it so with Paramount's blessing.

RED ALERT

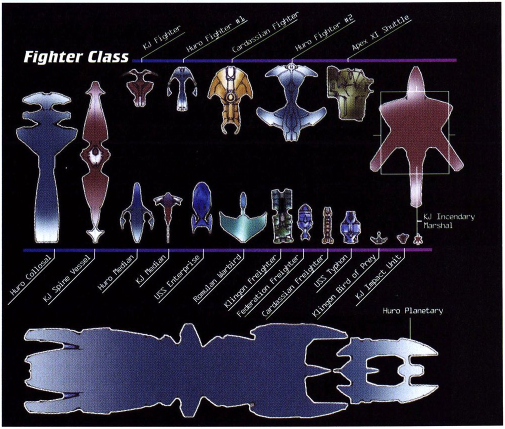
This dog-fighting focus leads to action unlike anything you've ever seen in a Trek game. You'll find you and your fellow Valkyries swimming in swarms of Borg, Romulan and Kam'Jahtae fighters hell-bent on destroying you—and not just mindlessly. Invasion's enemies, even at this incomplete stage, are quite agile and evasive during combat—a far cry from the mindless drones often present in Colony Wars games, including Red Sun. As you might expect, however, there are plenty of tools at your disposal to even up the odds. Many of the missions assign you wingmen who help protect your rear, but the most trusty way of staying alive is making



The ship models not only look exceptional on their own, they're lit dynamically by the nearest sun, adding an even greater look of realism.

SHIPS LOG

Just to give you an idea of what you'll be up against, here are scale drawings of your new space friends. For reference, your Valkyries are roughly the size of the Kam'Jahtae Fighter.


Fighter Class
KJ Fighter
Huro Fighter #1
Cardassian Fighter
Huro Fighter #2
Apex XI Shuttle
KJ Incendary Marshal
Huro Collosal
KJ Spine Vessel
Huro Median
KJ Median
USS Enterprise
Romulan Warbird
Klingon Freighter
Federation Freighter
Cardassian Freighter
USS Typhon
Klingon Bird of Prey
KJ Impact Unit
Huro Planetary

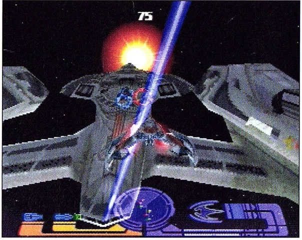
PS2

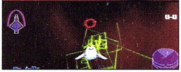
THE FINAL FRONTIER

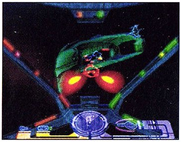
It's amazing that it's taken this long for the Trek universe to make it on to the PlayStation, but don't expect any such snafus as far as the PlayStation2 is concerned. Malamed was coy about revealing Activision's plans, but mentioned that **"We are committed to bringing Star Trek games to the PlayStation market. We haven't addressed the timing issue, but I would expect a PS2 title more quickly than it took Invasion to reach the current PlayStation."**

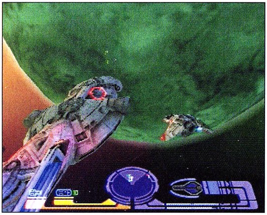
Apparently some of the Invasion team have already been dreaming up scenarios for the new system: **"[PlayStation2] would allow us to simulate real-time scene translations such as flying from space into a planet's upper atmosphere," said lead programmer Mike Anthony, "and you could choose whether to fly down to the planet's surface."** The closest thing Invasion does to this is allow you to fly inside of a huge Borg cube, but Anthony reasons that **"on PS2 you could take this further: [You could] dock with craft and explore the vessels as part of an Away Team in a Quake-style environment."**

Haydn Dalton, Invasion designer, is a bit more vague. **"If we were to do a PS2 sequel I would like to see things such as chasing battle cruisers through wormholes, being caught up in true armada-sized battles, land-based aerial combat, and so on...but that is a whole new design."** We expect lots more "whole new designs" for Star Trek games in the coming years, since Activision has the license tied up for many years to come. One possibility: The company recently announced a partnership with Verant, developers of the blockbuster online PC RPG EverQuest, to develop a **massively multiplayer online game based in the Trek universe**. The game is expected to release late in 2001—right about the time the PS2 should gain its online capabilities. Coincidence? You decide.









The cockpit view (left) puts you right into the action: You'll feel each laser blast as it rocks your ship to the side, and you'll see a slight inertial delay as you shift directions.

> **"We have done a game like Invasion before—just not this bloody good!"**
>
> **—Chris Graham, Senior Designer**

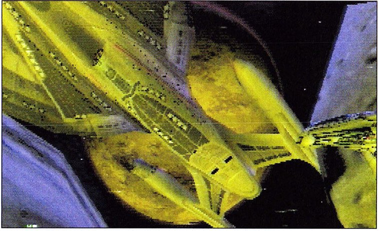
best use of the bevy of phasers, torpedoes and special weapons whose number and variety increase as you complete missions. Fans will recognize the familiar sights and sounds of the typical weapons, but later in the game new technologies (some alien) are discovered that are considerably more impressive and fun to use—such as the gravity gun that produces black holes in space. If all else fails, you can also try pulling off a few of the ship's preprogrammed (and fun to watch) evasive maneuvers that are activated similar to special moves in a fighting game. There's even a motion-lock option, "similar to the Z-lock used in Zelda 64," that lead programmer Mike Anthony suggests will "help inexperienced players target the enemy in 3D space easier" during the tougher battles. And trust us, there are plenty of those.

ATMOSPHERIC ANOMALIES

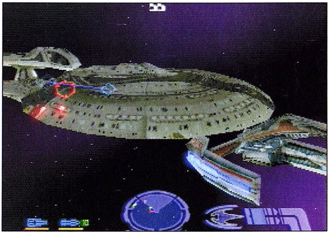
Hopefully, the action won't be so intense that you aren't able to pause and just enjoy the outstanding sights and sounds of Invasion. The opening of the game immediately sets the tone, with Michael Dorn as Worf (of *Next Generation* fame) narrating the mission objectives. The scene opens to reveal a dramatic shot of your Valkryie flying toward the underbelly of the Enterprise-E while original thematic music plays in the background. This incarnation of the well-known ship first seen in the movie *Star Trek: Insurrection*, looks absolutely stunning as it drifts lazily toward a debris field in front of a soft yellow glow generated from the planet behind it. In fact, the 3D model in the game is the same one used in the movie, only with less detailed textures (obviously). When the editors at *OPM* saw that mission, we knew that we were in for a visual treat. And those thoughts were greatly reaffirmed in a later mission when a large Romulan Warbird decloaked before our eyes jus in time to fire its main guns into our ship's hull.

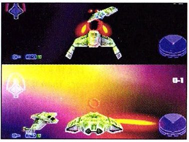
"I feel that past Star Trek games have failed to generate the correct atmosphere visually," says Anthony, "so we have really concentrated on ensuring that the craft and special environments—such as animating nebulas, wormholes, and enormous planets—look like what you expect from an episode." Just wait until you se the battles atop a planet's atmosphere, not to mention the eye-popping Borg attack.

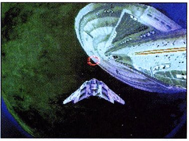
Hopefully these visuals won't overshadow the game's attention to audio. A variety of original

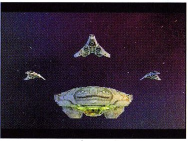


When we saw Colony Wars, we didn't think space shooters could look much nicer on the current PlayStation. We were wrong.









The story is advanced through a number of dramatic cinematic sequences, all delivered via the use of the in-game engine (above).

tracks have been created for Invasion, and whether Activision decides to license some of the songs from the series' iconic soundtrack or not (we suggested *Next Generation*'s opening theme), the game already has some brilliantly epic songs that change dynamically in keeping with the action on screen. And Activision has gone through the trouble of having Patrick Stewart provide the voice of Captain Picard—who will provide help during missions—and also tapping Michael Dorn to narrate the mission briefings as Worf throughout the game.

When the whole package comes together it provides an atmosphere that definitely feels like Star Trek—no small feat considering the lackluster PC offerings so far. Granted, the game is still a ways from completion, but what we've seen is extremely promising. In more ways than one, Invasion is boldly going where no Trek game has gone before.

"GOOD TEA. NICE HOUSE."

Since he's the primary character in Star Trek: Invasion, we interviewed Michael Dorn briefly about Trek and its games and found that he was about as...well, shall we say...succinct...as the character whom he played for so many years. Perhaps a bit of Worf rubbed off on him.

OPM: Aside from the Trek-related things, what are you up to these days?
Michael Dorin: After four seasons on *Deep Space Nine*, I've broken into the independent film market with hopes to direct. Secondly, flying.

OPM: Do you ever play the Trek games, and if so, are there any favorites?
Dorin: I'm not a big fan of the role-playing games—it takes too much brain power.

OPM: Spoken like a true Klingon. Speaking of, one of the ideas rumored would be a television series based on the Klingons. What do you think of that? A PC game along the same lines is already in the works.
Dorin: I always thought instead of *Deep Space 9*, [the new series] should have been a Klingon spin-off—people love them more.

OPM: Any particular favorites among the *Next Generation* movies?
Dorin: I liked *First Contact* the most.

OPM: And in closing, would you like to grace us with one of your favorite "Worf-isms"?
Dorin: "For love I would need a Klingon woman. Earth women are too fragile."

Editors' note: As soon as we brought up the subject of getting his independent film produced, we couldn't shut him up!

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Reviews

The final word—official and unbiased

Meet the Critics

Kraig Kujawa
Editor-in-Chief

Kraig watched as his former favorite team, the Oilers-turned-Titans, found yet another way to lose the big game. At least it was an entertaining one.

Favorite Genres: Sports, Strategy
Current Favorites: Madden NFL 2000, Colony Wars: Red Sun, Star Trek: Invasion
Can't Wait For: PlayStation2 football and that fancy online Final Fantasy game

Joe Rybicki
Deputy Editor

After roaming the decks of the USS Voyager on the Paramount lot, Joe had a hard time settling back into work: He kept running into doors, realizing too late that they didn't slide open in front of him.

Favorite Genres: Adventure, RPG, Puzzle
Current Favorites: WWF SmackDown!, Ace Combat 3, Star Trek: Invasion, Tron Bonne
Can't Wait For: Err...PS2?

Wataru Maruyama
West Coast Editor

Vagrant Story has plagued Wat like a sore throat. No matter how hard he tries to focus on his review games, VS nags at him and demands attention. There's no Chloraseptic for his problem this time.

Favorite Genres: Fighting, Racing, Adventure
Current Favorites: Vagrant Story, Vagrant Story, Vagrant Story
Can't Wait For: SF EX3, R5, DrumMania

Mark MacDonald
Associate Editor

Everything was going great for Mark this month—he stole a big new comfy chair, the Rams won the Super Bowl, his car hadn't been shot or broken into for almost two straight weeks—and then came BattleTanx. Why, God, why?!

Favorite Genres: Action, Adventure, RPG
Current Favorites: Fear Effect, Front Mission 3, The Misadventures of Tron Bonne
Can't Wait For: Final Fantasy IX, X, XI, XX, XXXIV

Rain on the PS2 parade

by Mark_MacDonald@zd.com

With the impending debut of the PlayStation2 in Japan, I've been thinking all month (or at least the last 10 minutes before deadline) about what we can expect in the coming months. Don't worry, I won't give you the same spiel about better graphics, new types of gameplay, or any of that upbeat, feel-goody crapola—we all know there are PS2 titles on the way that are gonna blow the socks off our asses, but I'm here to talk about the inevitable downsides to any new machine. In case you've never gone through a new system launch before, here's what to watch out for:

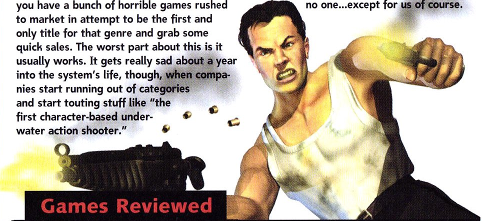
GAMES THAT LOOK GOOD, PLAY LIKE POOP: Just look at Toshinden, which very few people know is Japanese for "crappy game with decent graphics." There were plenty of better-playing fighting games available for the older systems, but Toshinden was all 3D and new and shiny and a lot of people got suckered into buying it. Oh, and speaking of Toshinden...

"FIRST IN A GENRE" GLUT: This is where you have a bunch of horrible games rushed to market in attempt to be the first and only title for that genre and grab some quick sales. The worst part about this is it usually works. It gets really sad about a year into the system's life, though, when companies start running out of categories and start touting stuff like "the first character-based underwater action shooter."

MORE COVERAGE THAN GAMES DESERVE: Does anyone really care about Take the A Train games? Hell no! But when it's the only game you have screens of for a new system (and somehow Take the A Train always is), you want to see it and we want to show it.

SAME GAME, NEW LOOK: This is where a company takes the same old title they have been putting out for years and churns out a quick sequel for the new machine. I don't want to name any names, but the PS2 Armored Core better be more than a fresh coat of paint, and if there's another cookie cutter Tomb Raider rehash I'm coming down there. Oops, guess I named some names.

INFLATED REVIEW SCORES: Not from us of course, heh heh, don't be silly! But take a look back at some of the earliest PS games and how they were rated in the magazines. Yes, of course time changes some things, but I mean, come on—Loaded? That game was a load alright, even back then. It's very easy to get caught up in the excitement of a new machine and new graphics, so trust no one...except for us of course.



Games Reviewed

Ace Combat 3	92
Armored Core: MOA	97
BattleTanx: Global Assault	94
Brunswick Circuit Pro Bowling	97
Colony Wars: Red Sun	93
Deception III	94
Die Hard Trilogy 2	90
Fear Effect	88
Front Mission 3	91
Hydro Thunder	97
JoJo's Bizarre Adventure	96
NASCAR Rumble	95
Rollcage: Stage II	95
Syphon Filter 2	87
Tron Bonne	96
WWF SmackDown!	89

Box Score

It doesn't get much more simple yet effective than *OPM*'s five-disc rating system. Very few games are lucky enough to get our golden five-disc salute, but if one does, be sure to pick it up!

●○○○○ We'd rather smell William Shatner's toupée than play this game.

●●○○○ Below average. There are fundamental flaws with this game; get something better.

●●●○○ A good title. It's a fun game with some flaws that can be overlooked.

●●●●○ Definitely a topnotch game. Very good and well worth your time.

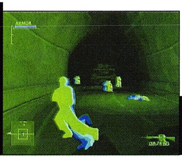
●●●●● Fabulous! These are the games that really make you proud to own a PlayStation.

RATING PENDING RP CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Developer	Eidetic
Publisher	989 Studios
Genre	Adventure

1–2 Players
Memory Card 3 blocks
Analog Control Compatible
Vibration Function Compatible

Syphon Filter 2



PlayStation

More like Syphon Filter 1.2

Playing Syphon Filter 2 is like meeting up with one of your old buddies from high school who still works at a gas station—it's fun to see him again, but pretty sad he hasn't moved on or done anything with himself.

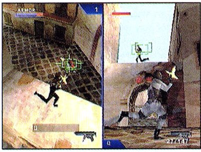
What we have here is really less of a proper sequel and more of an add-on mission pack. The graphics look pretty much identical to the first game: There's a nice variety of locales, including mountains, an airbase and downtown Moscow, but there's also still a lot of sloppy textures, blocky models and horribly lame FMV cutscenes. Controls are another straight transplant from the original that could have used some tweaking—you've got lots of different moves, but quick weapon selection and auto-aiming between multiple targets are still trouble spots.

Most of the additions and improvements 989 was touting for the sequel don't end up making much of a difference either. The new jumping ability is used only sparingly and you have no real control over it, and outside of the bad guys taking head shots at you, the AI doesn't seem significantly better. As for the multiplayer game, it's a fun diversion but not at all balanced and ultimately quite shallow.

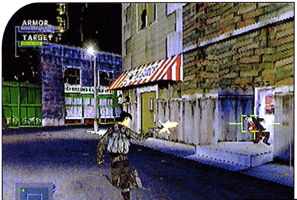
So with most of the game's framework carried over from the original Syphon Filter, the focus in part 2 falls on the story and level design, both of which are handled well but hold few surprises. Many of your missions play like rehashes from the first game—rescue a prisoner from jail, disarm bombs before the timer runs out, infiltrate an enemy facility without being seen, etc. There are a few moments of inspired and original design, but they are few and far between. It's also worth noting that much more of the game is based on the "sneaking"-style levels this time around, with less all-out action, which could be a good or bad thing depending on your tastes.

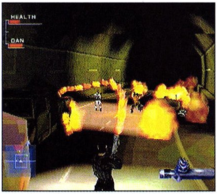
In the end, most people who enjoyed the first Syphon FIlter will be content with part 2, if a bit disappointed by its lack of ambition and innovation.

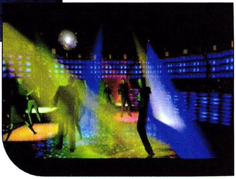
—Mark MacDonald

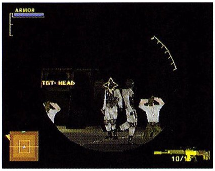


The multiplayer game (above) is mindless fun for a bit, but the nature of the controls (easy lock-on autoaiming or having to stop moving to aim for headshots) limits its depth.









The rendered FMV cutscenes (above) still look barely better than the in-game graphics—why? Someone get these guys in touch with Capcom or Square and teach them how to do this stuff right.

Box Score

Pros

- Pretty good enemy AI (like the first game)
- A few new fun level ideas
- Good storyline

Cons

- Graphics rough around the edges
- Auto aiming and weapon switching still problematic
- Not much improved from the first game

"Most people who enjoyed the first Syphon Filter will be content with part 2, if a bit disappointed by its lack of ambition and innovation"

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

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Rating

MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

1 Player

Memory Card 1 block

Analog Control Compatible

Vibration Function Compatible

Developer	Kronos
Publisher	Eidos
Genre	Adventure

Fear Effect

PlayStation

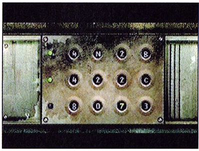
An awesome, unique adventure—from Eidos?

This game really surprised me; I've had high hopes for Fear Effect ever since I first saw it last May, but even so I never expected it would turn out as good as it did.

First of all, the graphics are just stunning. Looping full-motion video backgrounds make the gritty, futuristic settings come alive—plants sway in the wind, waves gently ripple across water and lights flicker, changing the shadows and shading of everything around them. The tradeoff for constant FMV (as you may notice from the screenshots) is a cropped screen and some slight graininess, but in motion FE is still one of the best looking PlayStation games so far. Plus the real-time characters look just as good as the backdrops: A mix of anime and American comic art styles, they are truly unique and look more like cartoons than piles of polygons.

In terms of gameplay, Fear Effect generally fits into the Resident Evil adventure game mold: You spend most of your time searching for items, fighting enemies and solving big puzzles, with a boss or reflex-driven section thrown in once in awhile to mix things up. Unlike your average adventure game, however, you die a lot in Fear Effect, and I mean a *lot*. Sometimes you have to get killed a bunch before you can even tell what you're supposed to be doing, then die a bunch more trying to actually do it. All this death might not be so bad—it does make the game challenging—except that it takes so long to restore your saves that you spend a significant amount of time looking at the loading screen. Other sore points include the strange "confidence-based" health system and aspects of the controls, which aren't quite as responsive as they should be when aiming and using weapons.

But it's easy to forget these complaints when you're wrapped up in Fear Effect's graphics and intense story. Expert voice work and a fascinating mix of action, sci-fi and horror elements make for a refreshingly mature experience you can't help but get drawn into. Don't miss this one. ***—Mark MacDonald***



Look familiar? The above shot is typical of the puzzles in Fear Effect, which range from wonderfully challenging to tediously obscure. Luckily the majority of them are both logical and enjoyable.

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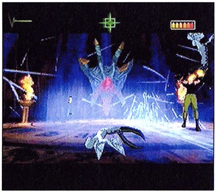
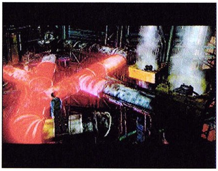
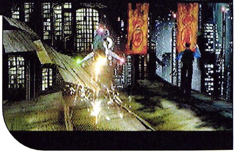
6
.90 PISTOL







The FMV in Fear Effect often plays an active role in the game. For example, some bosses (like the bullet-spraying helicopter above) are actually part of an animated background. Other games have attempted this effect before, but none as convincingly as Fear Effect.

Box Score

Pros

- Great story, dialogue and voice acting
- Cool FMV backgrounds and stylish characters
- Some great puzzles

Cons

- Controls could be tighter
- Weird health system
- Lots of dying and reloading saved games

> "A fascinating mix of action, sci-fi, and horror elements you can't help but get drawn into. Don't miss this one."

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

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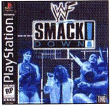
Rating

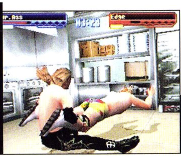
RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Developer	Yuke's
Publisher	THQ
Genre	Action



1~2 Players
Memory Card 1 block
Vibration Function Compatible

WWF SmackDown!



Excellent—but not quite perfect

A couple issues ago I had the chance to take a long look at an early version of this game. I was impressed, not only because of the solid wrestling engine but also because of the intriguing plans for a revolutionary Season mode. Now, having had the chance to play the finished product, I have to report that it's not quite what I had expected.

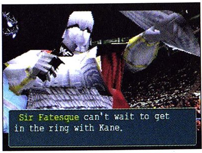
That's not to say that SmackDown! is a bad game—far from it! The actual wrestling engine is as exceptional as expected. Though the game gives the appearance of having a small arsenal of moves, the situational modifiers (i.e., when your opponent is on the mat, against the ropes, etc.) and ability to alter your repertoire of moves offer a good amount of variety. A well fleshed-out reversal system helps even more, as does the ability to take the action to five different backstage areas.

The wrestler models, for the most part, are the best I've seen yet. Animation is smooth, as well, with superb motion captures and some great added touches, like wrestlers grabbing themselves in pain and rolling around on the mat.

But it's the Season mode that's both the greatest triumph and the biggest disappointment here. The ability to build up a created wrestler and follow him through years of competition is fantastic, especially when you start to forge your own alliances and rivalries (though the graphical choices for building your own character are disappointing). And forcing created wrestlers to "buy" access to advanced moves with experience points is a brilliant idea.

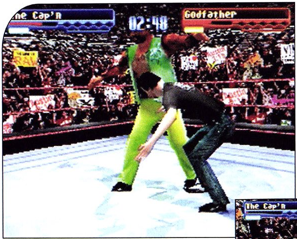
But the promised backstage episodes, which were to give your wrestler a chance to interact with the superstars, are extremely disappointing. The fact that there's no voice wouldn't have been much of a problem if the text were at least halfway interesting. Instead we get "I wonder what Buh Buh Ray and D'Von are talking about." Pathetic.

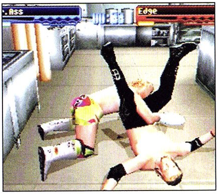
Nevertheless, it's an excellent game; I just wish some areas had a bit more polish. *—Joe Rybicki*

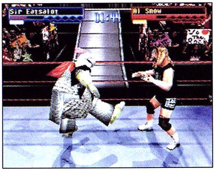


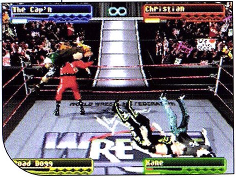
Sir Fatesque can't wait to get in the ring with Kane.

Though the Season mode does offer some drama, the writing is so bland that you don't really get a good feel for what's going on (above). But check out those character models (left)!









The excellent collision detection makes four-way dances (above) and tag team matches especially interesting: Certain moves can connect with more than one opponent, which makes it possible to accidentally land a move on your own ally.

Box Score

Pros

- Extremely deep Season (and Pre-Season) mode
- Excellent graphics and animation
- Good reversal system
- Backstage madness!

Cons

- No voice, not even an announcer
- Small selection of moves at any given time

"It's an excellent game; I just wish some areas had a bit more polish."

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

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Rating

MATURE
M
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Developer	nSpace
Publisher	Fox Interactive
Genre	Action

DIE HARD TRILOGY 2
VIVA LAS VEGAS
PlayStation

1 Player
Memory Card 1 block
Vibration Function Compatible
Analog Control Compatible

Die Hard Trilogy: Viva Las Vegas

PlayStation

Time for McClain to Hang Up His White Shirt

When Die Hard Trilogy arrived in the first year of the PlayStation's life, it was notable because it offered a variety of games that showcased the system's potential in addition to being pretty fun to play. Unfortunately, neither of those things can be said about this sequel.

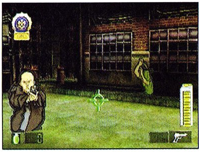
Like most disappointing Hollywood sequels, Die Hard Trilogy 2 is a shameless rehash. All of the main elements present in the first game (three different gameplay styles, a t-shirt clad John McClain, complete with Bruce Willis voice impersonator, and loads of blood) once again comprise the portions of this second "trilogy." And by the way, what's up with that? The first game's scenes were derived from each of the three *Die Hard* movies, hence the trilogy moniker, but this one takes place in a story set in Las Vegas that was never put to film. Dumb.

This redux might have been more palatable if there were some noticeable improvements over the previous game, but aside from better special effects and a few cinema sequences piecing together the levels, there's nothing that makes Die Hard 2 Trilogy seem much better. After all, you would think that Fox Interactive might have learned a few new tricks during the years that set the two games apart.

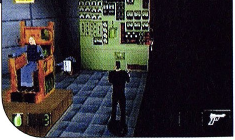
Instead, what you get is a pretty decent shooting gallery (that looks almost identical to the previous one but is the 'gem' of this title), a lame car chase sequence that looks like a cheap Twisted Metal ripoff (with even worse controls), and a mediocre action game that we've seen 200 times before. To tell you the truth, I still found that I enjoyed the first-person shooting gallery—call it a guilty pleasure—but after a few levels, it got way too repetitive after I mowed down the millionth wave of similarly dressed henchman.

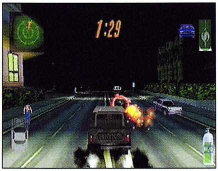
Die Hard Trilogy 2 isn't a horrible game—it's just a really uninspired and forgettable one. In fact, one of the only kicks I truly got out of it was shooting rats and rolls of toilet paper during gunbattles.

—Kraig Kujawa



A Practice mode allows you to hone your gun skills, even though it isn't really needed. We appreciate the thought, however (above).





Ever want to throw the switch on a electric chair? Now, you can (above).

Box Score

Pros

- Three different types of gameplay
- Above-average graphics

Cons

- Only the first-person light gun-like game is really fun. One out of three isn't a good average.
- Lame sound

"Like most disappointing Hollywood sequels, Die Hard Trilogy 2 is a shameless rehash."

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

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Rating

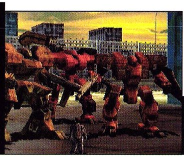
RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Developer	SquareSoft
Publisher	Square EA
Genre	Strategy

PlayStation
front mission 3
SQUARESOFT

1 Player
Memory Card 2 blocks
Analog Control Compatible
Vibration Function Compatible

Front Mission 3



PlayStation

Call in sick and unplug the phone

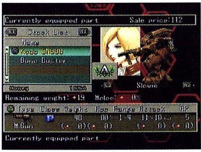
There's been about a dozen true strategy/RPGs released for the PS, and of those maybe a handful worth playing, but Front Mission 3 is the only title I would put alongside Final Fantasy Tactics as must-play games for any fan of the genre.

A lot of what makes Front Mission 3 so special is its believablilty. OK, yes, there are giant robots running about, but there are also tanks, troop transports, helicopters, and other recognizable weapons and military vehicles everywhere. The realistic and detailed storyline helps too: set on Earth in the near future (2112, to be exact), it deals with the same type of political and global power struggles that you might see on the nightly news—a refreshing change from the swords and sorcery setting almost every other title in the genre seems to be stuck in.

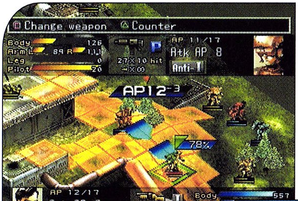
Besides the large amount of time spent developing the plot, you'll spend most of FM3 in combat—which is definitely a good thing. The game does a great job of easing you into the battle system and teaching you all the controls, ramping up the complexity and difficulty gracefully. There's plenty of room for planning and strategizing in troop placement, choosing attacks, and balancing your offensive and defensive capabilities, but never so much that the game gets bogged down or boring. There's also lots of opportunity for customization in building and equipping your mechs, and in the weapon and special skills you can develop for your characters.

Really the only complaint I have with FM3 is the lack of mission variety. There are more than enough stages (the game is *huge*), and the scenarios leading up to battle are all different and interesting, but too often the ultimate goal is merely to destroy all the bad guys. The few times you have different objectives—escape an enemy complex, take out the opposition leader, etc—are awesome, I just wish they weren't so rare.

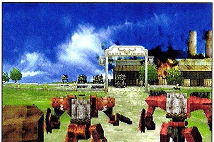
Even so, this is the kind of game that you can curl up with and forget the outside world for a week. Don't miss it. ***—Mark MacDonald***

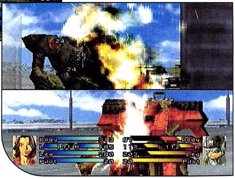

Currently equipped part
Sale price:112
Stock List
Name
Kodo SN898
Bone Duster
Money
Slowie
Remaining weight: +19
Melee: + 0%
Type
Class
Weight
Acc
Range
Attack
AP
M.Gun
Currently equipped part

Between battles you can customize your party in all sorts of ways (above)—upgrade pieces of your mech, sell off captured robots for cash or salvage them for parts, buy new weapons, even name your creations or give them a new paint job.


Change weapon
Counter
Body
Arm L
Leg
Pilot
AP 11/17
Atk AP 8
Anti-T
AP12-3
78%
AP 12/17
Atk AP 3
Anti-P

Body
Leg
Pilot
Wheel




Body
Leg
Pilot

Although you usually have a detached overhead view of the battlefield (top left) that you can rotate around, Front Mission 3 zooms in once you attack for cool close-up shots of the mayhem (above).

Box Score

Pros

- Huge game with multiple paths for replay
- Well-balanced and intense combat
- Nice graphics and sound
- Detailed and unique near-future setting

Cons

- Not quite enough variety in the mission objectives

"Front Mission 3 is the only title I would put alongside Final Fantasy Tactics as must-play games for fans of the genre"

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

● ● ● ● ◐

Rating

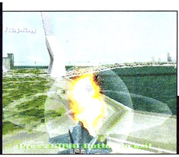
EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Developer	Namco
Publisher	Namco
Genre	Action

ACE COMBAT 3 electrosphere
PlayStation
namco

- 1 Player
- Memory Card 1 block
- Analog Control Compatible
- Vibration Function Compatible

Ace Combat 3



PlayStation

Large and varied, but lacking challenge

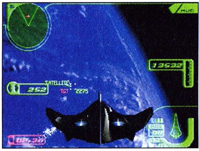
Considering how few flight games exist for the PlayStation, the Air/Ace Combat series basically leads the pack by default. And so when the newest game comes forward for review, it's hard to not have high hopes for an outstanding game. Unfortunately, though Ace Combat 3: Electrosphere is an entertaining and action-packed dogfighter, it still retains many of the flaws of the last game.

The biggest problem with Ace 3 is the challenge level: Even on the hardest setting, the game simply isn't that difficult. After playing through the whole game on the normal setting, I looked back and realized that I'd never been shot down. Not once. Oh, I'd crashed into buildings and the ground more times than I'd like to admit while trying to pull off some close ground attacks, and I'd had my ship infested by a virus in one level, but I'd never been knocked out of the sky by enemy planes, surface-to-air missiles, or anything. The lack of this kind of challenge really takes the tension out of what could have been an edge-of-your-seat game.

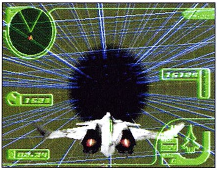
Counteracting this, however, is the large selection of missions. The variety here is probably the game's strongest suit (well, maybe next to the gorgeous graphics): You'll conduct missions focusing on air targets, ground targets, indoor targets, even satellites in space. This definitely saves Ace 3 from the monotony that doubtless would result from the lack of challenge. Also helpful is the grading system which pushes the diligent gamer to finish a mission in the shortest time possible.

It would have been nice to have a real story here, too; the game tries half-heartedly for a coherent plot, but the gist of the story is simply a rivalry between two tech corporations that I couldn't have cared less about. (In fact, I kept forgetting which side I was allied with.)

It's still an entertaining game, but without a real challenge (not even the benefit of a two-player mode) there isn't much to keep me coming back. *—Joe Rybicki*



The missions in Ace 3 now go so far as to send you into space (above), where the laws of physics behave a bit differently.



Toward the end of the game, you'll need to take on a computer AI opponent in a virtual-reality arena known as the Electrosphere (left).

Box Score

Pros
- Lots of varied missions
- Gorgeous graphics
- Fast, solid controls

Cons
- Very little challenge
- No coherent story
- No two-player modes

"It's an entertaining game, but without a real challenge there isn't much to keep me coming back."

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

● ● ● ○ ○

Rating

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Developer	Psygnosis
Publisher	Psygnosis
Genre	Action

1 Player
Memory Card 1 block
Analog Control Compatible
Vibration Function Compatible

Colony Wars: Red Sun

PlayStation

The third time's a charm

A new development team, a whole new focus. The Colony Wars franchise was always on the PlayStation's visual cutting edge, but the games were never polished otherwise. Pretty visuals are one thing, but the outrageously difficult missions and an unforgiving save system overshadowed what could have been a great series of games. But that's all in the past; this aptly named Red Sun shines brightly through those dark clouds.

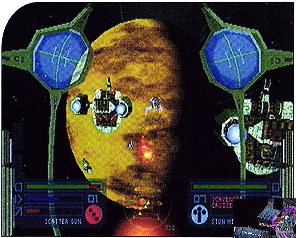
Vivid color and imaginative vessel designs often make Colony Wars feel more like a *Babylon 5* episode than the traditionally dark metallic world that sci-fi games usually reside in. In the middle of a dog fight you might be a little stunned by what looks like a moving work of art as much as it does a space battle. At any given time, a cacophony of missile and laser blasts splash throughout the screen against varied backgrounds, whether they be a nebula or a planetscape, with no noticeable slowdown. And there's nothing quite so satisfying as the thundering explosion caused by the fall of an enormous capital ship. Colony Wars is presented in Dolby Surround, and you really can tell.

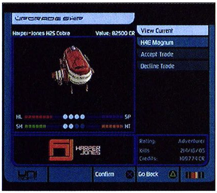
The battles are as fun to fight in as they are to gawk at. Red Sun offers a mission-based system that always gives you a choice of various types of assignments, many of which are beyond the normal (protect, kill, survive) fare. And if you find that one is particularly annoying, you can usually skip it altogether (provided it isn't one of a handful of mandatory plot-important missions), or recalibrate your weapons and defensive countermeasures to better suit it. If you're not certain about your custom armament, you can save your game before you make the modifications.

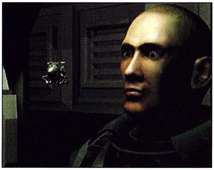
This flexibility is what makes Red Sun so much better than its predecessors—the developers concentrated on making the game accessible instead of emphasizing difficulty or realism. The end result is a Colony Wars game that you might actually finish—and have lots of fun doing so. ***—Kraig Kujawa***

PLASMA CANNON
SCAVENGER CRUISER
STUN MISSILE

Tons of lighting effects set the mood and scenery during missions (above). New ships and weapons are unlocked for purchase as you progress through the game (left).


SCATTER GUN
SCAVENGER CRUISER
STUN MISSILE


UPGRADE SHIP
Harper-Jones H2S Cobra
Value: 82500 CR
View Current
H4E Magnum
Accept Trade
Decline Trade
HL
SP
SH
HT
HARPER JONES
Rating: Adventurer
Kills: 214/16/05
Credits: 109774CR
Confirm
Go Back



1:28 7
SHIELDS
LASER MK III
NAVY DREADNOUGHT
NANOTECH MISSILE

CW:RS offers a third-person mode, which we certainly don't recommend using during combat. It looks nice, but isn't very practical.

Box Score

Pros

- Lots of weapons
- Beautiful graphics
- Great mission design
- Interesting story

Cons

- No two-player mode
- Really bad enemy intelligence
- Loads of load time

> "In the middle of a dogfight you might be a little stunned by what looks like a moving work of art as much as it does a space battle."

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

●●●●◐

Rating

MATURE
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

1 Player

Memory Card 1 block

Developer	Tecmo
Publisher	Tecmo
Genre	Strategy

Deception III: Dark Delusion

Not as twisted, but just as fun

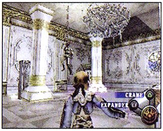
The Deception series of games were known for two things: that they were quite twisted (pitting you in the role of the bad guy) and that most people have never heard of them.

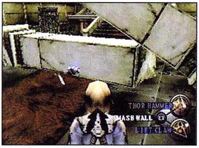
Deception III changes the formula a bit, and was clearly designed with getting a larger audience involved. The victims you dispatched in the first two games were comprised of relatively innocent people and sinister but sympathetic villains. Deception III's cast of trap meat is almost totally made up of people who deserve to get smashed into a spike wall, which actually takes away some of the edge of the experience. I know that sounds horrible, but it's true.

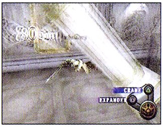
The story is entertaining, although it's riddled with lots of grammatical errors. Tecmo did a great job of adding lots of play value, with branching story paths and a huge number of traps to discover. The Trap License and the design of the first few chapters in the story makes the game very friendly to newcomers and quickly familiarizes them with the control schemes.

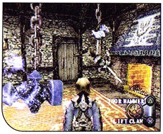
Graphics and control were never a strong point in the series and unfortunately, that hasn't changed. Even so, Deception III is unique and offers hours of addictive fun.

—Wataru Maruyama









It's now possible to perform endless combos in Deception III, but it's nowhere near as satisfying as inflicting mega damage by dropping multiple pillars on enemies (above).

Box Score

Pros

- Unique gameplay
- Good story with branching paths
- Tons of replay value

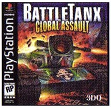
Cons

- Story text is full of grammatical errors
- So-so graphics
- Controls are a bit rough

● ● ● ● ○

OPM Rating

RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB



1–2 Players

Memory Card 1 block

Vibration Function Compatible

Developer	3DO
Publisher	3DO
Genre	Action

BattleTanx: Global Assault

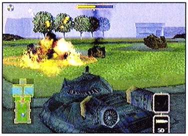
Putting the Ass in Assault

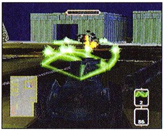
It's not a good sign when any game gives you a new appreciation for Tiny Tank, but next to BattleTanx that average-at-best game seems like a classic.

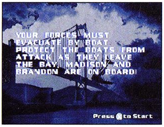
It's literally hard to look at this game, the graphics are so horrible—with incredibly boxy buildings and tanks, crummy textures, lame special effects and explosions, and a wildly fluctuating framerate, BattleTanx looks like a first-generation PlayStation game. Controls depend a lot on which tank you are using; those with the strafe ability are manageable, but the tanks without it maneuver like shopping carts and are just about as fun to drive.

Luckily BattleTanx isn't a complete wash—the multiplayer game can be fun, despite the terrible graphics and clunky controls. More options would have been nice (like being able to set your own kill or time limits), but there are a good number of levels to choose from, up to three computer opponents you can add to the fray, and lots of different play modes (mostly capture the flag variants). It's definitely no Quake II or Twisted Metal, but compared to the rest of BattleTanx it's definitely a highlight.

—Mark MacDonald

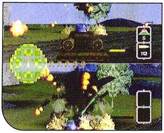






YOUR FORCES MUST EVACUATE BY BOAT PROTECT THE BOATS FROM ATTACK AS THEY LEAVE THE BAY. MADISON AND BRANDON ARE ON BOARD!

Press ⊗ to Start



The "story" in B:GA unfolds not through rendered FMV, not through real-time cinemas, not even spoken voice, but instead through small paragraphs of text (right)! Intense!

Box Score

Pros

- A few fun multiplayer modes

Cons

- Terrible, terrible graphics
- Lackluster single-player mode
- Controls can be annoying

● ◐ ○ ○ ○

OPM Rating

NASCAR Rumble

So crazy that it just does work

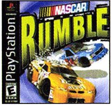
If someone came into my office to pitch a game concept as "It's Jeff Gordon meets Crash Team Racing" I would probably laugh at them right before I punch them in the throat. But lo and behold, here it is, having taken the shape of NASCAR Rumble. And I must admit, it's pretty darned fun.

NASCAR vehicles are powerful machines—just think of what they could do away from the (relatively) safe confines of their regular tracks. It's an amusing idea, to say the least, and EA has pulled it off pretty well. I loved dumping Dale Earnhardt into a lake at a loading dock and pushing the Andretti family one by one into the wall with a hammer ramming weapon. And I'd imagine die-hard NASCAR fans might get an even bigger kick out of it (I'll admit, I'm not too interested in the sport).

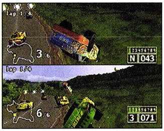
You won't get bored of NASCAR Rumble anytime soon because of lack of levels or play modes—there's plenty of them. Instead, the difficulty (or lack thereof) is what I'm worried about. Rumble is more about bashing your way to the top—once you're there, it's hard to lose the lead. But then again, some Jeff Gordon fans might find that to be a case of this game being realistic, while others will find it annoying. *—Kraig Kujawa*

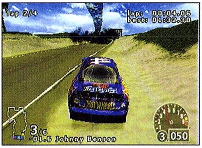
EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Developer	Electronic Arts
Publisher	Electronic Arts
Genre	Racing

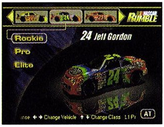


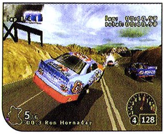
1~2 Players
Memory Card 1 block
Vibration Function Compatible
Analog Control Compatible





Whoa, Nellie, lookee dat tornado on the road! Tornadoes are a pain in the ass and will throw cars around the road like confetti (above).





Box Score

Pros	**Cons**
• Speedy, colorful graphics • Lots of tracks and cars • Very smooth gameplay	• Horrible "commentator" • Maybe a bit too easy • Some of the weapons are lame

● ● ● ◐ ○
OPM Rating

EVERYONE
E
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

PlayStation
rollcage STAGE II

1~2 Players
Memory Card 1 block
Vibration Function Compatible
Analog Control Compatible

Developer	ATD
Publisher	Psygnosis
Genre	Racing

Rollcage Stage II

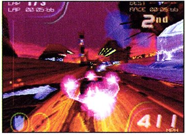
Insane racing with some frustrating flaws

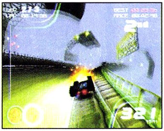
The original Rollcage was an interesting racer with one significant problem: There just wasn't enough of it. Now Psygnosis has undertaken to remedy this with Stage II, and the results are, on the whole, favorable.

In addition to the standard racing features in Stage II—circuit mode, time trial, etc.—the game includes some unique highlights. One such is the maddeningly challenging Scramble mode, which forces players to race through a progressively more difficult series of intricately twisting courses suspended in midair, trying to meet a preset time restraint. Other additions include two-player combat arenas, Survivor modes, and an off-the-wall extra called Rubble Soccer.

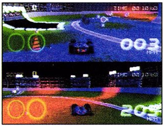
The game also suffers from some new problems, however: Though the tracks are still as disappointingly short as in the original game, Stage II seems to have some odd patches of noticeable slowdown. And the two-player Combat mode, though a nice idea, is hindered by restrictive level design and the lack of an easy means of tracking your opponent. The Scramble mode would also have been better with less touchy controls.

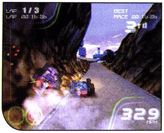
Stage II is still worth a look for anyone seeking a new racing experience; it just needs a few more tweaks to take first place. *—Joe Rybicki*





Stage II's impressive list of new features includes the intriguing—but quirky—Rubble Soccer (right).





Box Score

Pros	**Cons**
• Lots of new features • Good selection of tracks • Fantastically stylish graphics	• Too-short tracks • Some irritating slowdown • New features are poorly implemented

● ● ● ◐ ○
OPM Rating

RATING PENDING
RP
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

PlayStation
The Misadventures of Tron Bonne

1 Player

Memory Card 1 block

Analog Control Compatible

Vibration Function Compatible

Developer	Capcom
Publisher	Capcom
Genre	Action

The Misadventures of Tron Bonne

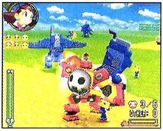
Surprisingly enjoyable action romp

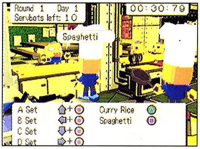
Even though we categorized this Megaman Legends sequel as an action game, it doesn't fit neatly into any one category—Tron Bonne is basically a collection of different genres and minigames, all enjoyable in their own way, and all neatly tied together in one big lighthearted package.

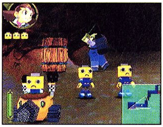
The overall goal in Tron is to collect money, which you do by completing a series of increasingly challenging puzzle, first-person dungeon exploration, and Legends-style action/shooting levels. Taking on too many genres often spells disaster, but Tron succeeds by keeping everything simple and straightforward, concentrating on fun rather than technique.

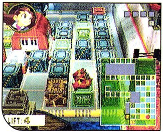
Another big part of the charm of Tron Bonne comes from the Servbots—those little guys who look like Lego men. There are 40 unique Servbots you can talk with, name, train to help you on your missions, torture, help develop special skills, and more. Plus their high-pitched voices and eager-to-please attitude lends the game much of its distinct humor.

With its crisp, colorful graphics, plenty of excellent voice work, and eclectic gameplay that's never very deep but can be awfully addictive (especially the puzzle game), Tron Bonne makes a perfect rental for fans of almost any type of game. *—Mark MacDonald*









Tron Bonne includes a smorgasbord of different games, including (clockwise from bottom left) puzzle, first-person dungeon exploration, action/shooting and various mini-games.

Box Score

Pros	Cons
• Raising and training Servbots • Great voices • Simply fun to play	• Not very long • None of the games are very deep

● ● ● ● ○

OPM Rating

TEEN
T
CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

PlayStation
JoJo's Bizarre Adventure
CAPCOM

1~2 Players

Memory Card 1 block

Developer	Capcom
Publisher	Capcom
Genre	Fighting

Jojo's Bizarre Adventure

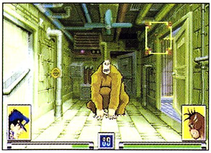
Bizarre and brilliant at the same time

It certainly has been an up-and-down situation for Capcom's 2D PlayStation titles. After SF Alpha 3 won our fighting game of the year, Marvel vs Capcom turned out much less impressive.

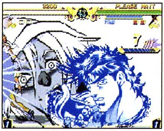
True to its title, Jojo's Bizarre Adventure is fittingly weird, but it's also a great fighting game. The gameplay meets with Capcom's usual high standards although the depth is lacking compared to other offerings.

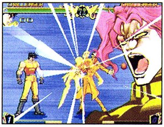
You get all the standard modes you expect with this genre, like Arcade, Training and Versus modes, but they also threw in an awesome story mode and tons of secrets to unlock. The point system keeps you coming back for more and the story has a few branching points as well.

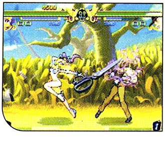
There are definitely lots of lost animation frames from the original arcade version, but it's amazing how much stayed in considering they ported it over from a CPS III board. To give some perspective, the Versus series (Marvel vs Capcom, X-men vs SF, etc) that so taxed the capabilities of the PlayStation ran on CPS II. In short, Jojo is right up there with SF Alpha 3 and Guilty Gear as the best the system has to offer in 2D fighting. Die-hard fans will feel at home immediately while the simplistic engine is newbie friendly. *—Wataru Maruyama*



Mini games like the monkey shoot above are very cool, but most others sort of suck.







Box Score

Pros	Cons
• Cool story mode • Lots of goodies to unlock • Great animation • Tight controls	• Fighting engine is not too deep • Weirdness factor may turn some gamers off • Minigames are hit or miss

● ● ● ● ◐

OPM Rating

Hydro Thunder

Man the life boats, this ship is sinking

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

Developer	Blue Shift
Publisher	Midway
Genre	Racing

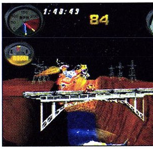
PlayStation
Hydro Thunder

1~2 Players
Memory Card 1 block
Analog Control Compatible
Vibration Function Compatible

Midway has done a good job of surprising me with the quality of their arcade ports, especially with MK4 and the Blitz games. So it's especially disappointing to see this below-average translation of an above-average racer.

It's not the actual engine translation that's so disappointing; there's the expected drop in frame-rate, but the solid Dual Shock controls help counteract that. It's still really annoying in places, and can hurt your performance during some tight spots, but the precise controls can help you pull through. Similarly annoying are the super-glitchy graphics: Hit the water too hard, for example, and you may find the entire surface disappearing as the camera view moves underwater.

But what's most disappointing is the lack of any significant improvements. Sure there are two brand-new tracks, but they're both short and boring. There's a two-player mode with no noticeable hit in frame-rate, but the glitchy graphics make this nearly unplayable. And there's a circuit mode, but that's simply playing through all the tracks in one go, with the only reward being four new boats. And basically, once you gain these and open up all the tracks (by coming in first on each one in Arcade mode), there's really no reason to come back to the game. *—Joe Rybicki*



Hydro Thunder's tracks are all about insane jumps, hidden shortcuts...and crappy frame-rate.

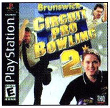
Box Score

Pros	Cons
Solid controls Great track design	Bad frame-rate Nasty glitchy graphics Lack of added features hurts replay value

● ● ○ ○ ○

OPM Rating

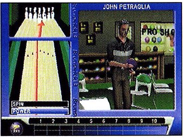
Brunswick Pro Bowling 2

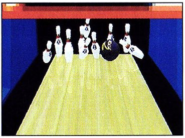


1~8 Players
Memory Card 1~6 blocks
Analog Control Compatible
Vibration Function Compatible

Developer	Adrenline
Publisher	THQ
Genre	Sports

EVERYONE E CONTENT RATED BY ESRB





If you're too lazy to get up and exert yourself playing the high-impact sport of bowling, then this game will satisfy your thirst for pin-bashing.

The name of the game with Brunswick is realism. From the real-life pros available at your controls to the brand-name bowling balls (each with strengths and weaknesses), you'll feel like you're really on the pro circuit—if that's what you really want.

There's plenty of play modes; you can compete on the Brunswick Pro Circuit with one of the pros (or your own created bowlers), or chill out and play a relaxing game of Cosmic Bowling. Despite its elaborate physics engine and eye for realism, anyone can learn the game easily. Surprisingly, it's the load times that are a bit tough to stomach. *—Kraig Kujawa*

● ● ● ● ○

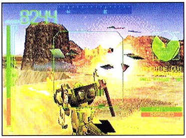
Armored Core: Master of Arena

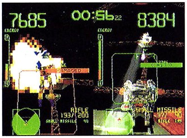
PlayStation
Armored Core
Master of Arena

1~2 Players
Memory Card 1 block
Vibration Function Compatible

Developer	From Software
Publisher	Agetec
Genre	Action

TEEN T CONTENT RATED BY ESRB





If you've played either of the two previous Armored Core games, you pretty much already know what you can expect from this latest title: decent controls (although *still* no analog support?! Why?! Arghh!), a solid graphics engine, and a nice variety of single-player missions. Split screen or link cable multiplayer is still good fun once both players get used to the controls, and as always there's plenty of parts, weapons and paints for you to customize your mech. The big new feature this time around is supposed to be the expanded Arena mode, where you challenge computer characters to one-on-one combat in a large tournament of sorts. A nice addition, but one that will really only be enjoyed, like the rest of AC: MoA, by those who are already fans of the series. *—Mark MacDonald*

● ● ◐ ○ ○

JOHN McCLANE STUNT DOUBLE #18
-HEADWOUND FROM HIGH SPEED WRECK WHILE
ATTEMPTING EXTREME DRIVING DOWN VEGAS STRIP.

JOHN McCLANE STUNT DOUBLE #134
- STEPPED ON PROXIMITY MINE NEAR
ROULETTE TABLE WHILE BATTLING TERRORISTS.

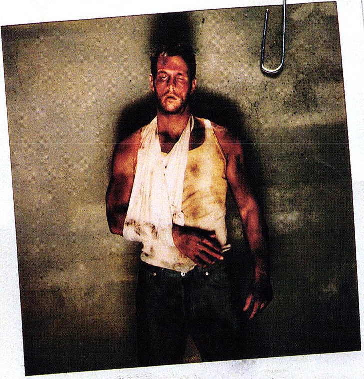
THEY COULDN'T HANDLE BEING
JOHN McCLANE. CAN YOU?

MATURE M CONTENT RATED BY ESRB

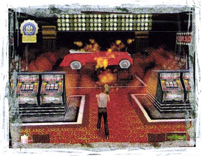
FOX INTERACTIVE

www.foxinteractive.com

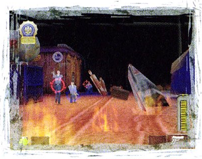
For mature audiences only.



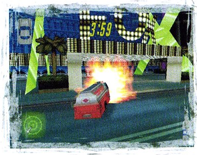
JOHN McCLANE STUNT DOUBLE # 56
- ARM BROKEN NEAR SLOT MACHINES IN
SHARPSHOOTERS DUEL WITH A RUSSIAN TERRORIST.



McCLANE IN 3RD PERSON ACTION MODE



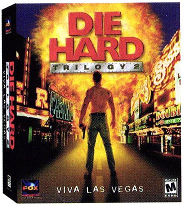
McCLANE IN SHARPSHOOTER MODE.



McCLANE IN EXTREME DRIVING MODE.

FLEX YOUR SKILLS IN ONE OF THREE UNIQUE GAME MODES. OR MIX ALL THREE MODES INTO ONE INTENSE STORY-DRIVEN DIE HARD ADVENTURE.

IF YOU LIKED THE ORIGINAL BEST-SELLING DIE HARD TRILOGY, THE SEQUEL MAY JUST BLOW YOUR MIND. IT STILL HAS 3 INTENSE GAME MODES, BUT NOW McCLANE IS BATTLING INTERNATIONAL TERRORISTS IN LAS VEGAS WITH BETTER GRAPHICS, SMARTER ENEMIES, MORE HIGH-POWERED WEAPONS, FASTER CARS AND A LOT MORE ODDS STACKED AGAINST HIM. SO TRY TO SAVE SIN CITY—JUST MAKE SURE YOU ALSO SAVE YOUR OWN BUTT.



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SaGa Frontier 2

SaGa FRONTIER™ II

THE BATTLE SYSTEM MADE EASY

EXPERT GAMER STRATEGY

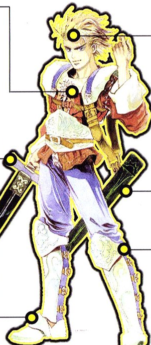
by Jim Mazurek
jim_mazurek@zd.com

If you're looking for a combat-heavy nonlinear RPG with plush graphics and a magnificent musical score, then SaGa Frontier 2 may be the game you've been dreaming of. However, if you're not one to drool over the thought of entering repetitive battles every 10 seconds or so (like me), and you absolutely hate having to make even simple decisions in-game, this game isn't for you. With that off my chest, I think it's fair to say that SaGa Frontier 2 is a love-it or hate-it kinda game. You'll either love its use of clean graphics and the deep and involving storyline, or you'll hate it because the combat system and level up structure are just plain ridiculous. Either way, it's worth checking out to see for yourself.

Special thanks to Fernando Bustamante at Square EA for his help!

LP/WP/SP/HP: How Many Different Ps Are There?

We'll be the first to admit that the battle system in SF2 is a bit overwhelming at first. You'll need to learn about the different points systems, the spells, the Spell Arts, the weapons, the Weapon Arts, the weapon skill levels, and so on and so forth. This list breaks down the most important details of each, and hopefully clears up most of the questions you may have had.



❶ LP (Life Points)

LP stands for Life Points. As such, LP are your primary means of healing during sticky situations. Once you use up your LP, they are gone until you go to an inn and sleep. Unfortunately, there are no items in the game that restore LP, so the 20 or so points devoted to each character should be used for emergency situations only. Don't burn through LP if you don't have to.

❸ WP (Weapon Points)

WP is how SF2 assigns a value to each of the game's special arts. Lesser arts will consume only a few WP each use, while greater arts can consume gobs of them. Each WP that you use is permanently used up, much like Spell Points in normal role-playing games. Restore them by visiting an inn, or by using an Ark Stone. Your maximum WP will increase as you gain experience.

❺ Character Roles

There are many different types of roles for your character, and each of them has its own distinct set of strengths and weaknesses. See the "Roles" sidebar on page 105 for more details.

❷ SP (Spell Points)

For the most part, SP act just like WP. They can only be restored by visiting an inn, or by using an Ark Stone. Like WP, they increase when you gain experience.

❹ Weapon Arts

New Weapon Arts are learned through the prolonged use of existing Weapon Arts. The more that you use them, the better your chances for learning new ones. Each character can only have eight Weapon Arts equipped at one time (max), so it pays to be organized and know which ones are best. There are six categories of Weapon Arts: Martial Arts, Sword Arts, Staff Arts, Bow Arts, Spear Arts and Axe Arts.

❻ Custom Combo Arts

Combo Arts act like regular arts, except for the fact that two, three, or even four of them will connect at once for massive damage. There are three distinct types of Custom Combo Arts.

1) Duo Combination (two attacks)
2) Triple Onslaught (three attacks)
3) All Out Attack (four attacks)

Equipping Arts

Did you know that you can check and change your party's equipped arts list at any time? Just access the arts tab on your main menu, then page through each character. Once inside, you'll see that you can equip a maximum of eight arts per character. Once a specific art is learned by a character, that art is also fair game to anyone else in your party. So if you have two characters with swords and one of them learns the Bear Crush art, why not equip it on the other guy as well? Unfortunately, the Duel Battles require you to manually enter commands during battles (charge, charge, cleave for example), so you will be unable to equip these in this menu. Refer to the arts list (on page 101) for a command/arts conversion list to help you during Duel battles.

THE WEAPONS: ARTS LIST

This is the complete list of standard Weapon Arts. Use this chart as you'd use a move list for a fighting game (for Duel Battles). Listed next to each art are the respective WP, attack powers, and commands for use during a Team Battle. Remember that the arts are listed in ascending order (damage-wise), so you probably won't learn the ones farther down the list until very late in the game.

Martial Arts

Martial Arts are of great help when a weapon breaks and you have nowhere else to turn. Start developing these as early as you can, since some of the higher-level arts can be quite brutal.

Art	WP	Attack Power	Commands
Punch	1	3	Punch
Karate Punch	2	9	Ready, Punch
Backhand	3	15	Feint, Punch
Rotation Kick	3	21	Charge, Kick
Bear Paw	4	24	Charge, Grab
Brawl	4	27	Punch, Kick, Punch
Ogre Run	4	32	N/A
Crush Beat	4	35	Charge, Punch, Punch
Heart Breaker	5	38	Focus, Grab, Punch
Arm Hammer	5	45	Charge, Charge, Punch
Kick Rush	5	49	Kick, Kick, Kick
Corkscrew	6	51	Charge, Focus, Punch
Somersault	6	54	Charge, Kick, Kick
Triangle Kick	6	57	Feint, Kick, Kick
Sumo Throw	8	60	Punch, Grab, Kick
Kitchen Sink	7	62	Charge, Feint, Kick
Rolling Thunder	9	64	Focus, Punch, Punch, Punch
Tumbler	9	72	Feint, Grab, Charge, Grab
Cascade Rising	10	79	Focus, Kick, Kick, Kick
Dragon Revolution	10	85	Feint, Grab, Kick, Punch
Kamikaze	10 (+1LP)	90	Charge, Charge, Charge, Grab
Eradication	10	99	Punch, Punch, Kick, Kick

Sword Arts

When combined with the power of Gustave's Sword (+53), Sword Arts are probably the strongest in the game. Decent-quality swords are easy to find, so take advantage of these powerful arts.

Art	WP	Attack Power	Commands
Slash	1	9	Slash
Double Slash	2	21	Cleave, Cleave
Cross Slash	3	25	Slash, Backslash
Strike Slash	3	27	Feint, Slash
Running Slash	3	33	Feint, Backslash, Backslash
Mist Double	3	34	Feint, Cleave, Slash
Smash	4	37	Charge, Cleave
Final Letter	6	39	Backslash, Cleave, Backslash
Dead End	7	42	Cleave, Backslash, Slash
Double Stroke	4	44	Ready, Backslash, Backslash
Cross Break	5	46	Charge, Cleave, Cleave
Slice & Dice	5	49	Slash, Backslash, Cleave
Dragon Tail	5	50	Feint, Slash, Backslash
Head Cracker	6	52	Ready, Charge, Slash
Heaven & Hell	6	55	Charge, Slash, Backslash
After Vision	7	55	N/A
Head Wind	7	59	Feint, Cleave, Backslash
Bull Crush	8	63	Charge, Charge, Cleave
No Moment	8	66	Ready, Ready, Ready, Slash
Blade Spray	9	71	Ready, Charge, Charge, Backslash
Bear Crush	10	80	Charge, Charge, Charge, Cleave
Multi-Way	13	88	Slash, Backslash, Cleave, Slash

Staff Arts

Anyone in the Knights family is proficient with Staff Arts (i.e. Wil, Ginny), so you'll probably be using them quite a bit. Staff Arts often inflict status ailments like Psyche Down or Def. Down.

Art	WP	Attack Power	Commands
Beat	1	8	Beat
Roll Beat	2	10	Swing, Swing
Heart Beat	3	14	Focus, Beat
Lobster Slayer	4	28	Swing, Feint, Swing
Bone Crush	4	31	Focus, Charge, Beat
Head Splitter	4	34	Focus, Focus, Beat
Gong Beat	6	42	Ready, Charge, Swing
Painful Beat	5	45	Ready, Focus, Beat
Rock Crush	7	50	Charge, Beat, Beat, Beat
Turtle Killer	10	61	Charge, Focus, Focus, Beat
Grand Slam	8	74	N/A
Time & Tide	14	77	Feint, Focus, Beat, Beat

Bow Arts

Bow Arts don't hit as hard as Sword or Spear Arts, but quite a few of them inflict status effects. Because they often favor status ailments over damage, Bow Arts are definitely an acquired taste.

Art	WP	Attack Power	Commands
Shoot	1	10	Shoot
Aim Shot	3	18	Feint, Focus, Shoot
Random Shot	2	12	N/A
Shadow Bind	3	N/A	Feint, Focus, Shoot
Arrow Rain	4	32	N/A
Mind Break	5	36	Focus, Feint, Quickshot
Sidewinder	4	44	Focus, Focus, Shoot
Shadow Slayer	6	49	Shoot, Focus, Quickshot
Thousand Needle	6	52	Quickshot, Quickshot, Shoot
Rapid Fire	7	55	Charge, Quickshot x3
Hi-Speed Arrow	7	64	Charge, Focus, Focus, Quickshot
Crystal Prism	9	84	Quickshot, Shoot, Quickshot, Shoot

Axe Arts

A select few can use Axes effectively, but these weapons do dish out considerable damage. Tyler is especially well-suited to use the Axe, so make sure to have a fresh supply of them on hand.

Art	WP	Attack Power	Commands
Slash	1	12	Slash
Tomahawk	2	17	Charge, Throw
Heel Crush	2	19	Focus, Backslash
Hyper Hammer	3	24	Charge, Backslash
Wood Cutter	4	27	Charge, Charge, Slash
Fake Out	3	34	Feint, Backslash, Slash
Skull Crush	4	40	Focus, Charge, Slash
Axel Turn	5	44	Ready, Charge, Backslash
Ogre Crossing	4	49	Ready, Backslash, Backslash
Sky Dive	5	53	Charge, Feint, Throw
Megahit	6	60	Ready, Charge, Slash
Yo-Yo	7	55	Focus, Charge, Throw, Throw
Wheel Grind	5	61	Feint, Slash, Slash, Slash
Flash Trinity	8	70	Ready, Slash, Slash, Backslash
Sky Rendezvous	9	73	Throw, Throw, Focus, Throw
Tornado Divine	12	91	Backslash, Backslash, Charge, Slash

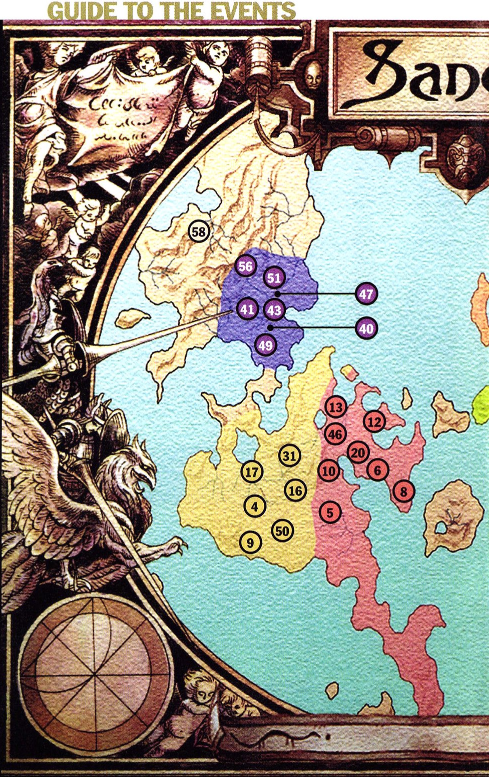
Spear Arts

There are few characters that specialize in Spear Arts, but if they do, be prepared for some impressive results. The Wide Swing is an excellent attack for taking out groups of enemies.

Art	WP	Attack Power	Commands
Thrust	1	14	Thrust
Swing & Stab	2	18	Backslash, Thrust
Double Thrust	2	22	Thrust, Thrust
Lawnmower	4	27	Backslash, Backslash
Rush	3	32	Charge, Thrust
Skewer	4	36	Charge, Charge, Thrust
Wave Thrust	5	43	Backslash, Thrust, Thrust
Wide Swing	5	47	N/A
Brain Shaker	4	51	Focus, Feint, Thrust
Aiming	5	55	Focus, Focus, Thrust
Squash	6	57	Feint, Backslash, Thrust
Shining Arm	8	63	Charge, Feint, Thrust
Heavenly Strike	10	65	Backslash, Backslash, Thrust
Beast Lightning	9	69	Ready, Focus, Backslash, Thrust
Thousand Cross	12	80	Thrust, Thrust, Thrust, Thrust
Fearless Triple	14	88	Feint, Backslash, Backslash, Thrust

SaGa Frontier 2
GUIDE TO THE EVENTS

01	Gustave Arrives	2 7
02	Gustave Exiled	3
03	Departure From Homeland	4
04	Gustave 12 Years Old	5
05	Gustave & The Blacksmith	6 16
06	Gustave 15 Years Old	7 8 9 10 16
07	Wil's Departure	6 8 9
08	Reunion	N/A
09	Desert Megalith	8 10 11 16 17
10	Mother's Sickbed	11 12 16 17
11	Infiltrate! Alexei Gang	12 15
12	Conquest of Wide	13 14 16 17 20
13	Gustave and the Pirates	N/A
14	At the Mines	16 21 22 23
15	Showdown Alexei	14 20 16 23
16	Gruegel	N/A
17	Vogelgang	N/A
18	Weissland	N/A
19	Laubholz	N/A
20	Father's Sudden Death	13 21 22
21	Landing	23 24
22	Beyond Grand Valley	23 24
23	Tycoon Wil	16 18 19 27 29 30
24	Battle of Bunkerhill	25
25	Gustave's Reunion	26 28
26	Construction of Hahn Nova	27 28
27	At the Mines II	16 17 18 19
28	The Firebrand Tragedy	29 30
29	Johan the Assassin	16 17 18 31



Map Key (by Region)

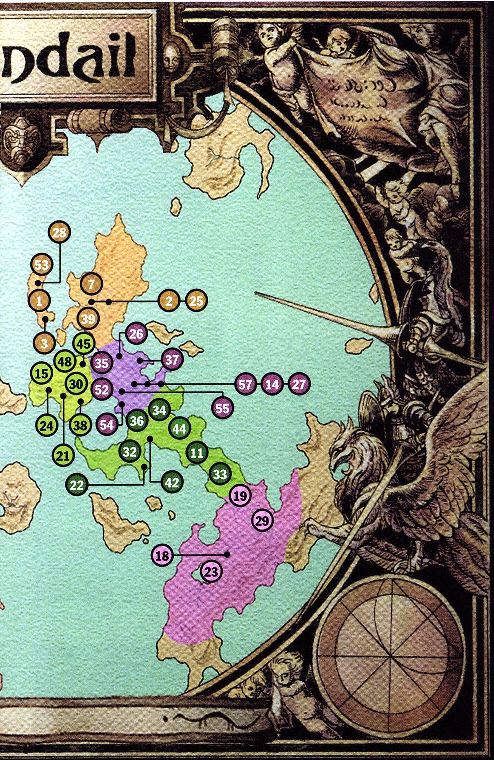
- ● Torionis
- ● Lordless Land (E)
- ● Weissland
- ● Jade & Wide
- ● Unknown Land
- ● Grand Desert
- ● Grand Teille
- ● Lordless Land (W)
- ● Merchmin

How to Use This Guide/Map

• This guide labels the different paths of SaGa Frontier 2 by event and coordinates them with a useful number system. These numbers represent the events that you can travel to upon completion of the previous event. So, if you beat the event Gustave Arrives (1), you can now access two new events (2 and 7). If you beat Gustave Exiled (2), on the other hand, you'll only be able to access one new event (3).

See how it works? Very simple. Knowing this, you should be able to plot a course through the game on your own. With a pad of paper, just jot down the different event numbers (noting that they are colored according to region) and you'll be well on your way to completing SaGa Frontier 2.

Once you complete the game, you'll be able to make a save file and restart to complete the next wave of events. The cool thing is that you'll still have all of your items and acquired arts. This makes it much easier to complete the second or third time through.



16 17 18 19 29 31 32 33	Anima F. Fiasco	30
N/A	The General's Memories	31
16 19 33 34	Wil vs. Egg	32
34 35	The Southern Fort	33
36 37	Into the Forest	34
36 37	Gustave's Successor	35
16 17 18 19 38 39	To the Monster Nest	36
38 39	Hahn Nova in Flames	37
16 17 18 19 41 42	Life Tree Island	38
16 40 42	Death of Cantal	39
43	Return of the Egg	40
16 17 18 19 44	To the Fossil Caves	41
43 45	Kelvin's Last Battle	42
47	Misty's Plot	43
16 17 18 19 40	To Cast a Rainbow	44
46 48	Fake Gustave Arrives	45
48 49	Ginny's Departure	46
45 46	Deadly Battle with the Egg	47
49 50	Edelritter	48
50 51	Ginny's Adventure	49
51 52	Peace Conference	50
52 53	Insect Megalith	51
53 54	Battle of Hahn Nova	52
55	Pursuing the Egg	53
N/A	Battle of South Moundtop	54
19 56	To Gustave's Stronghold	55
16 17 18 19 57	Battle of S. Moundtop II	56
58	Into the Northern Capital	57
N/A	The Last Megalith	58

Boss Battle Formations

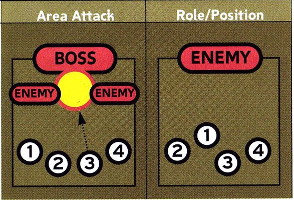
- Getting your roles set up before boss battles can be invaluable. Here's a list of what we used for some of the tougher ones. (See diagram at right.)

Area Attack

When encountering a boss who's supported by multiple enemies up front, it's wise to use an area attack like the Wide Swing. This way, you can stun the two supporting creatures while still inflicting a decent amount of damage on the main boss. This is only necessary with one attack, since multiple stuns get no cumulative bonus.

Role/Position

❶ A character with lots of HP and WALL here.
❷ A well balanced character with ACE here.
❸ Your strongest attacker as HEAVY ATTACK here.
❹ A well balanced character as BANDWAGON here.



SaGa Frontier 2 Walk-Through

Wil's Departure–Showdown! Alexei Gang

WILLIAM KNIGHTS' QUEST

SaGa Frontier 2 is an open scenario RPG that has many different paths that lead to the end. This guide shows you the quickest way to get from start to finish and does not include many of the side quests or optional events. It details the paths for William Knights only. The numbers on the events coordinate with those on the map preceding this page (hence the strange, non-linear numbering system). If you want a direct path, don't stray from these numbers. Just e-mail jim_mazurek@zd.com for more info on the optional quests.

01 Wil's Departure

Wil begins in the town of Westia after setting off on a quest to find Quells.

❶ Locate the bar in the upper left corner of town and enter the building. Talk to the man there and a girl (Cornelia) will enter the room. Talk to her and she'll join your party. Narcisse will also join up. Leave Westia and travel to the Ruins of Hahn.
❷ Once you arrive, head all the way to the left and enter the small stone archway. Here you'll meet Tyler, who will also join your party. Your goal is to continue down the cave until you find one of the three Quells located there: the Amber Maleate, the Pocket Dragon, or the Kris Knife. Once you find one (or all) of these Quells, leave the cave and return to Westia. This will complete the scenario.

02 Desert Megalith

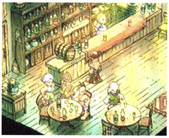
Wil begins in the town of Westia at the home of his aunt and uncle.

❶ Return to the bar and talk to your friends about a new quest.
❷ Leave Westia and head to Gruegel. In Gruegel, talk to the townspeople there and gather information about the Desert Megalith. Leave Gruegel and enter the Continent Interior. Navigate through the Interior until you reach the town of Vogelgang.
❸ In Vogelgang, talk to the people at the bar (including the bartender). Read the Guest Book he offers you, then leave. Once you leave the town of Vogelgang, this scenario will be complete.

03 Infiltrate! Alexei Gang

In Thermes, Wil sends Tyler out on a quest to the City of Night. At the same time, Wil infiltrates the infamous Alexei Gang.

❶ Talk to Tyler. He'll head to the City of Night. Leave the bar, then Wil will warp back to the town of Westia. Approach one of the men in the bar and they will ask you to join them in their quest.
❷ You'll be in the City of Night with Wil, then the game will switch back to Tyler. You'll need to talk to (and kill) a series of people before progressing in this scenario. First, go to the boy at the top of the ladder.
❸ After defeating the boy, head out to the bar in the upper left hand corner of the town and exit through the back door. Three Ruffians will attack you. After finishing them off, go back into the bar and talk with everyone. You'll learn of a man named Kisk.
❹ Head down to the house with the note stapled on the door. Read it and a woman will appear telling you the news about Kisk. Head right to find Alexei near the fire and talk to him.
❺ Proceed northeast and find the woman in the small house. She's next to some bunk beds. Talk to her and she'll reveal info about a boy named Kyle. Return to Alexei once more (near the fire), then proceed to the ladder and talk to all the kids nearby. Enter the house to the right and talk to the old man there. Exit the house and return to the bar. Talk to the kid hiding in the shadows, then head to the eastern side of town.
❻ Enter the tower structure and search the hole in the center of the room. Leave, and outside, talk to the dog. Now, you'll need to run all the way back to the other side of the city (near the bar) and find the spot where the dog ran off.



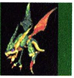
❼ When you approach the dog, enter the passage to the right of him. After talking to the man, you'll be thrown into a small dungeon. Find Kyle (by touching him), then leave the dungeon area. The scenario will complete after a small story sequence.

Showdown! Alexei Gang 04

Wil starts in Mickage Quarry, where his main quest will be to find and defeat Alexei.

❶ Head up and around to the left (one or two screens), then go down to the right until you find the base of the mine entrance. You'll see two net ladders. Climb up the ladder on the right, then proceed up the next ladder and go to the very top of the quarry. Make a Quicksave, then enter the mine. The battle ensues...

Boss: Alexei's Dragons (x2)
HP: N/A
Strategy: It's impossible to kill these dragons, so don't feel bad when you lose. Nina will revive everyone in your party and destroy the dragons with the Megabolt spell soon after.

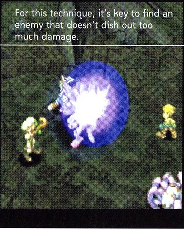


❷ After the first battle with the Dragons, you'll enter another battle where you'll need to defeat Alexei himself.

Boss: Alexei
HP: >3,000
Strategy: This is a tough fight. You'll need to use the strongest attacks that you've learned up to this point. If you fail because you don't have enough WP, use the "Cheat the System" technique before battle.

CHEAT THE SYSTEM

There are supposed to be only two ways to earn back the WP (weapon points) that you expend in battle. Normally, you'd have to either visit an inn and sleep, or use an Ark Stone (which fully restores both WP and SP). Unfortunately, there never seem to be any inns when you need them, and those darned Ark Stones aren't exactly easy to come by. As such, I developed somewhat of a poor man's WP-restoring system. Follow the steps at right and you'll back in action in no time!



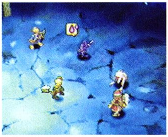
For this technique, it's key to find an enemy that doesn't dish out too much damage.

❶ Make sure to have some sort of recovery-based spell equipped on each of your characters. Water is a good choice.
❷ Engage in a Team Battle with the weakest enemy you can find (any enemy will suffice). Kill off all enemies in the group, except for the weakest one (the guy who inflicts the least amount of damage).
❸ On the following turn, enter the Defend command for each character (characters will regain WP each time they defend).
❹ Use Water to restore lost HP to damaged characters. The Defend skill will significantly reduce damage, but it won't completely eliminate it.
❺ Repeat steps three and four until your WP are completely restored.

05 At the Mines

Wil starts in the Svendorf Mines, and, after a small story sequence, he'll be taken to Westia. After hearing of trouble back at the mines, Wil checks it out.

❶ Return to the mines and you'll discover that it's infested with monsters. You'll need to navigate through the mines (saving miners as you go) until you reach the far right side. You'll encounter a room that's full of enemies (these baddies continually respawn from a little generator in the back of the room). Approach the generator and you'll enter a fight. You'll need to select the "close-in" option to destroy the generator (during battle). If you don't, the enemies will just keep appearing. Once you've destroyed the generator, the scenario will end.

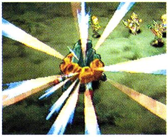


You'll fight between 20 and 50 of these little guys when you're in here. Ugh! More Gremlins!

06 Beyond Grand Valley

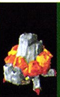
Wil needs to find a way to cross the Grand Valley. The ridiculous toll for crossing the bridge is definitely out of the question.

❶ From the Stone Bridge, head down until you find Narcisse. He'll join your party. Continue down until you enter the forest area. Covered in fog, the enemies won't become visible until they're right up in your face.
❷ Advance through the forest until you reach an area with a large clearing in the middle of the screen. Make a Quicksave, then prepare your characters for a tough boss battle (equip your best arts, best weapons, best armor, and use defense against fire if you have some).



This was the first boss that we couldn't beat on the first try. Roles are very important here.

Boss: Vulcanoid
HP: >8,000
Strategy: The first real test of strength, the Vulcanoid is one tough hunk of earth. Don't be afraid to expend all of your WP and LP for this battle. Every once in awhile, he'll dish out four attacks in a row on one of your characters. This usually leads to death. Remember that you can use the Water art to "revive" dead characters with minimum HP. Once they've revived, use LP to bring them back to full strength.



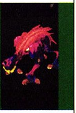
❸ Head up and to the left until you find a clearing in the fog. Cross the bridge and exit the area to complete the scenario.

Tycoon Wil 07

In the town of Laubholz, Wil learns of the Ice Megalith and the perils that lie therein.

❶ Head up to the shop on the left side of the street. Talk to the girl (Labelle) and she will join your party. Leave the shop, then exit the town of Laubholz.
❷ Next, travel to Weissland and enter the shop on the left. Talk to the shopkeep and learn some valuable info. Leave the shop and head down to the inn. Talk to the man there (William) and he will join your party. Exit the town area (making sure to have William in your party), and head to the upper left corner of the snow field.
❸ Once you enter the area with all the monsters, proceed forward until you come to a tent. William will inform you that the bridge is down and that you can enter the Ice Megalith.
❹ You'll need some basic dungeon-crawling skills here, since it can be fairly confusing at times. Once you reach the room with the two doors, enter either one and you'll be in the room with little blue warp points. Follow the warp points to the bottom (each point corresponds to the same point on a higher or lower block), then stand on the large warp point in the middle of the screen.
❺ Enter the door at the top of the screen, then watch the small story event. When you regain control, make a Quicksave, then re-enter the room with the large blue pillar. You'll fight the Ice Megalith Beast three times (with a chance to Quicksave between each battle); winning completes the scenario.

Boss: Ice Megalith Beast
HP: 1st Form >1,200 2nd Form >8,000 3rd Form >12,000
Strategy: Don't bother attacking either of the supporting monsters directly. Instead, focus all your power on the Megalith Beast itself. Things won't be too tough for the first and second forms, especially if you've got a couple key combos that can hit the beast for consistent damage. Once you've dealt enough damage, a "Retreat" command will appear. Use it!

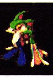


Anima Faith Fiasco 08

Once back in Westia, Wil decides to return to the Ruins of Hahn...

❶ Talk to your friends and exit the town right away. Go to the Ruins of Hahn and enter the small stone archway that leads down into the caves.
❷ You'll hop through the dungeon slaying wave after wave of monster filth until you finally reach the bottom. Here, you'll encounter some Anima Faith Followers. Head right and you'll find the Anima Faith Chieftain. Backtrack a few screens to the left and you'll see the doorway that was previously blocked is now clear. Head up through the doorway and you'll have to fight three Mermen.

Boss: Merman (x3)
HP: >1,000 each
Strategy: These guys are actually quite simple (they all have ultra-low defense ratings), and even your standard/mid-level arts will do enough damage to take them out swiftly.



CHARACTER ROLES

You'll have the choice of selecting many different roles for your characters in SaGa Frontier 2. Effectively choosing the roles for different situations can be tricky and sometimes downright confusing. Hopefully, this list of top choices will clear up some of that confusion and allow you to focus on more important things.

Ace/Bandwagon

Both of these roles increase the percentage of custom combos used in battle. These are KEY roles to use during boss battles—especially during Team Battles. Since they only increase the actual rate of combo attacks, it would be ridiculous to assign these roles during a Duel Battle. After all, in a Duel Battle you only have one character to worry about.

Heavy Attack/Blitz

These two roles are for the "Hercules" types in your group—the guys who just seem to hit hard no matter which art they use (like Gustaf). Both of these roles increase attack numbers (with Blitz offering just a little bit more, but sacrificing those key evasion skills). You'll notice a considerable gain in attack power when in Duel Battles with these roles equipped.

Heavy Spell

This role is useful only once in a while. A good choice would be a character with high specialization in Fire or Tree magic (or any other offensive magic, for that matter). It works well with your third or fourth character when in Team Battles; especially since it's entirely possible to connect with high-level custom attack/spell combos.

Wall/Defense

Both of these roles offer substantial increases to defense ratings (Wall is for one person only. Defense is for the entire party). We found these useful when we had a weak character up front during Team Battles. If you know a weak character is going to be pounded on repeatedly, assign them a role like Wall. It makes a difference, trust us.

09 Wil vs. Egg

Can Wil finally track down the Egg and get his hands on it once and for all?

❶ Talk to Tyler (he's sitting at the table in the bar), then listen to the plan of action. Leave Westia and travel to the City of Nights. After a few short cinema sequences, the game will cut back to Tyler in the City of Night.
❷ Climb up the pile of rocks nearby and enter the house. Talk to the man inside (Gustave) and he will join your party. Gustave has a special sword with an attack power of 53. This will make the battles flow a bit easier from here on in.
❸ You'll need to scour every screen of this town, exterminating *every* monster you encounter. Once you've done so, head to the center of town and talk to the pirate. Gulp—prepare to meet his pet Wyvern!

Boss: Wyvern
HP: >13,000
Strategy: Gustave does massive damage to the Wyvern, especially with arts like the Bull Crush. When you defeat the Wyvern, the scene will switch over to William Knights on the pirate ship.

❹ The scene will change over to Wil Knights, at which point you'll climb up the ladder and engage a girl and a few of her pet monsters. She's not a threat, so you can take her out with just a few simple combo attacks (see the Weapon Arts chart on page 101 for more info). Moving on, you'll need to go through the cabin door and engage the captain's pet Slime. Again, not a tough battle. Proceed through the ship and climb down the ladder to examine the small sack. Run up the ladder and go out onto the main deck. A boss battle will ensue.

Boss: Pirate
HP: >1,500
Strategy: Since it's a Duel Battle, the difficulty of the battle relies on your ability to use effective combos. Just use the chart on page 101 to find the most effective combo for your current weapon/status.

❺ Defeating the Pirate completes this scenario.

10 Into the Forest

Eleanor will be smack-dab in the middle of the forest looking for a tower. She gets a map of the forest, then proceeds inward.

❶ The entire forest is basically one big puzzle, with the screens looping over on one another until you finally find the correct path. What you'll need to do first is make your way to the right until you come upon a small stone-filled courtyard. Make a Quicksave, then approach the trees to the north of the courtyard. You'll be attacked by the Wood Guard.

Boss: Wood Guard
HP: >8,000
Strategy: This guy doesn't deal out much damage, especially if you have your roles set up to help increase the frequency of combo attacks. After six or seven rounds, you should be able to drop him.

❷ Advance a bit further into the forest (probably about five or six screens). When you reach the screen with the base of a large tree leading to a tower, you're almost there. Climb the tower to the fifth floor, then fight the boss.

Boss: Treefolk
HP: >12,000
Strategy: You'll definitely need to use an Ark Stone before fighting her, and, even then, this fight will be tough. Get the custom combos working as early on as possible and make sure to adjust your roles accordingly (see "Roles" sidebar).

To the Monster Nest 11

Eleanor begins at the entrance to the monster nest, with Raymond, Patrick and William as support.

❶ Go through the nest until you reach the mine, then explore the mine until you find the large blue glowing rock. When you exit the mine, Eleanor will say that you need to return the way you came. When you're almost all the way back, you'll be ambushed by the Gargoyle boss.

Boss: Gargoyle
HP: >18,000
Strategy: The Gargoyle has tons and tons of HP. It's basically a war of attrition; the only effective way to win is to build up WP before battle (use the "Cheat the System" technique). When you defeat him, this scenario will be complete.

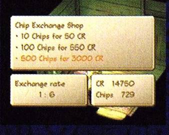
Life Tree Island 12

Richard Knights begins in the home of Narcisse, as Narcisse mentions an island that contains special life-replenishing seeds. Richard grows interested, so Narcisse asks him to go and bring back some of the seeds for him.

❶ Leave the house and approach the man with the boat at the north side of town. Take it across to Life Tree Island. Once on the island, enter the cave and proceed past the shipwreck. Go up and around to the left until you see the large tree.
❷ Pick up all the seeds and return the way you came. When you get back to the shipwreck, it will begin to move and take you to a completely different area to fight Mother Grendel.

FINANCE 101

Although it may seem like killing monsters and selling items are the best ways to grow rich, you'll soon find that the amount of time invested in doing so can be astronomical. We recommend spending less time crushing baddies and more time searching dungeons and caves for valuables. We've hit paydirt, Cap'n!



Chip Exchange Shop
· 10 Chips for 50 CR
· 100 Chips for 550 CR
· 500 Chips for 3000 CR

Exchange rate
1 : 6

CR 14750
Chips 729

Making Money

There are three ways to make money in SaGa Frontier 2.
❶ Kill a monster, then grab its loot.
❷ Find a large sum of hidden Crowns/Chips as treasure.
❸ Buy and sell Tools (or weapons) to specialized dealers throughout the world.

Currency Conversion

The Chips are a treasure of sorts, holding value only because they are actually little concentrated chunks of Anima. Upon entering certain shops, you'll find dealers who specialize in the conversion of these Anima Chips to Crowns (normal currency). There are different rates for different amounts, and you tend to get better conversions for larger trades. This is all great news until you figure out that your Crowns don't carry over from one scenario to the next (although Chips do). The moral of this story? Don't convert all of your Chips into Crowns if you don't need to. Only use up Chips as you need equipment, which should be rarely, if ever.

Boss: Mother Grendel
HP: >5,000
Strategy: You'll enter this fight alone (as a Duel Battle), so be prepared to whip out some of your better combos. Don't be afraid to waste all of your LP, either, since there will be no more combat after this fight.

❸ Bring the seeds back to Narcisse (in his home), then exit. You'll bump into a strange girl who seems to be in possession of the Egg. A story sequence will take place, after which you'll need to head back and talk with Narcisse once more. This will conclude the scenario.

13 To the Fossil Caves

Richard begins in the town of North Gate, where he learns of treasure in the Fossil Caves to the east.

❶ Proceed north and enter the inn. Talk with the blonde girl near the fireplace (Diana), and she will join your party. Exit the inn and head right toward the Fossil Caves.

❷ Avoid as many enemies as you can until you reach the bone bridge (you'll really need to conserve WP, SP, and HP for the boss). Cross the bridge and you'll be attacked by the Fossil Beast.

Boss: Fossil Beast
HP: >6,000
Strategy: The Fossil Beast will have two skeletons supporting him during the entire battle (when you kill them, they just reappear). Instead of attacking them, focus all damage on the Fossil Beast itself.

❸ After destroying the Fossil Beast and his minions, continue to the right and the bridge will shatter (closing off your path to escape). From here, head down and around to the left. Take one more screen north, then examine the nearby stones. This will complete the scenario.

14 To Cast a Rainbow

Richard begins in what used to be a grand and colorful tower (it is now a pile of useless rubble). Then he returns to Westia and learns a thing or two...

❶ Head to the bar and talk to Eleanor. At this point, Sargon will join your party. Run down and leave the town of Westia.

❷ Travel to the Water Tower and take the left staircase. Once inside, head down until you come across the Water Device. Examine it, then head down and to the left. Soon you'll come across another Water Device. Once you examine it, head back to the previous Water Device and check it out once more. It works!

❸ Go north from this room, then grab the item sack in the water (Spring Orb). Continue up the tower until you reach another Water Device. You won't be able to activate it yet, so continue on. Go right from this room, then wrap around and locate the next Water Device. Activate this one, then return to the previous Water Device and it too will activate.

❹ Head to the right and enter the room with rocks in the upper right corner of the screen. Grab the item sack (Blue Water), then jump over the pile of rocks. If it won't let you jump over the rocks, this means that you have not yet activated the four preliminary Water Devices. If it does let you pass, continue on.

❺ From this point you'll have to keep climbing ladders and activating Water Devices until you reach the roof. When you reach the roof, activate the sixth and final device—you'll be treated to a short cinema. This will complete the scenario.

15 Return of the Egg

Richard Knights begins in North Gate. He talks to Diana and she reveals that she's pregnant with his baby.

❶ Head to the inn and talk to the red-haired woman (Misty). After speaking with her, leave the inn and head south to the dock area. Talk to Diana once more and the scenario will be complete.

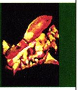
Misty's Plot 16

Richard is still in North Gate when he learns about a mysterious spell that's been cast over the townspeople there.

❶ Go to the inn and speak with the innkeeper. Exit the inn and head to the Fossil Caves. Go through it until you reach a room with a large dinosaur skeleton on the back wall.

❷ Examine the blue Anima Crystal and you'll be attacked by the Anima Beast.

Boss: Anima Beast
HP: >8,000
Strategy: This is a Duel Battle, so have some good spear combos set up for Richard (again, use page 101 as a reference). Also, it helps to have him assigned to the Heavy Attack role. Defeat the Anima Beast and the scenario will be complete.



Deadly Egg Battle 17

Richard learns more about the mysterious Egg, as well as a few things about Misty (Misty is the girl holding the Egg).

❶ From the docks, head up to the inn. Talk to the innkeeper, then travel to the right side of town and exit.

❷ You'll arrive at the Inland Settlement, at which point you'll need to approach the woman near the barrel. After talking with her, exit the Inland Settlement on the east side (left).

❸ Now that you're inside the Insect Megalith, travel down and to the right. Once you pass the group of monsters, climb up and approach Misty. You'll instantly be attacked by two Land Krakens. You'll fight each one separately in a Duel Battle, so don't freak out. After defeating the guards, choose the option to "Defeat Misty." Richard finally gets his hands on the egg and a small story sequence takes place. This completes the scenario.

Ginny's Departure 18

Beginning as an introduction to Ginny Knights, this scenario starts off in the town of Wide. Ginny sneaks out of her house and stows away on a pirate ship. The pirates discover her, but then she is rescued by Primiera. Ginny arrives in North Gate and meets a man named Roberto (who later joins the party).

❶ This is a story-driven event that completes automatically.

Ginny's Adventure 19

Ginny chats with her newfound friends in the town of North Gate and then enters the inn.

❶ Talk to Gustaf (who will join your party), then leave the inn and head for the cave on the right side of town. There are two ways to complete this scenario.

A) Enter the cave, then leave right away. Wowza!

B) Enter the cave and make the insects chew through the root. This will reveal a cache of hidden treasure. The way you get the insects to chew through the root is by repeating this process: Get to the screen below the large root and kill off all of the insects. Go up to check on the root, then repeat. Do this until a path through the root is cleared—you can then enter the dungeon and collect various treasures that are spread throughout. You'll find 5000CR, the Sea Beast Horn (x1), an Ark Stone (x1), a Silver Chain, and a Fossil Sword (x1).

Insect Megalith 20

This scenario begins with Ginny Knights in the town of North Gate. After a short conversation with her friends, she leaves the inn.

❶ Leave through the right side of town and enter the Inland Settlement. Again, you'll need to visit the girl near the barrel to gather some information. Go to the far left side of the settlement and proceed to the Insect Megalith.

(Continued on the page 108.)

Pursuing the Egg–The Last Megalith

WILLIAM KNIGHTS' QUEST

❷ Head down, then go right and up to where the large yellow egg resides. You'll be ambushed by two consecutive groups of monsters. Both are relatively weak non-boss characters, so don't stress out over it. When you defeat both groups, you'll complete the scenario.

21 Pursuing the Egg

Ginny talks to her grandfather and he tells her that the Egg has resurfaced once again. Ginny travels to Thermes to learn more about the situation.

❶ Once in Thermes, enter the bar and talk to Ventabre (in the middle of the room). He'll reveal the current location of the Egg, then the scenario will end.

22 To Gustave's Stronghold

In the city of Hahn Nova, Ginny seeks the Egg.

❶ Talk to each of your friends and get them to join your party (done automatically when you talk to them). After you do so, head north and exit the area. You'll appear on an overworld map of Hahn Nova, at which point you should select to enter the Commons area. Once inside the Commons, a small story event will take place.

❷ After the event, you'll find yourself on the Old Battlefield. Cross the bridge to the south and follow the path down. Soon you'll exit the area and the scenario will be complete.

23 South Moundtop Battle

Ven hands over Gustave's Sword to Gustaf and then details why he is the rightful heir to the legendary blade.

❶ This is a story-driven event that completes automatically.

24 South Moundtop Battle

Ginny Knights begins in Thermes city with the idea of soon leaving for North Gate.

❶ Leave the bar and exit the city. Once in North Gate, run north and then east to enter the Inland Settlement. Make a Quicksave, then go to the left and exit the settlement. You'll be ambushed by three groups of monsters, after which you'll square off with the Megalith Dragon.

Boss: Megalith Dragon
HP: >31,000
Strategy: Stacked with more than 30,000 HP, this beast takes quite a while to beat. Our only recommendation is to have your characters' roles assigned to increase the likelihood of custom combos. If you don't have high level arts like Bear Crush or Thousand Strike, then it's time to go build up first.

25 The Last Megalith

In the heart of the Unknown Land, Ginny and the rest of her party journey to the Last Megalith. Perhaps it's time to settle the score with the Egg once and for all.

The last boss in SaGa Frontier 2 acts much like the end boss in Xenogears. In case you didn't play Xenogears, we'll break it down real quick for you. There are basically six sub-bosses that all directly link to the final boss. All of these sub-bosses grant the final boss special powers (in one way or another). Therefore, any sub-boss that you destroy further weakens the lifeline of the final boss. As you can see, it's to your advantage to take out as many sub-bosses as possible before approaching the final boss. The only problem lies with your current character/equipment situation. If you don't have at least six Ark Stones, along with a Soul Crystal or two, you could be in a bit of trouble as far as your WP and LP go. Try the final boss approach many ways, knowing that the method listed below is only ONE of the MANY different possibilities.

❶ Once you enter the final dungeon, progress a couple of screens to meet the first sub-boss (you'll have no choice but to fight this guy). You'll find him in an ice-covered cave about five or six screens into the dungeon.

Boss: Water Lord
HP: >36,000
Strategy: Stacked with more than 36,000 HP, this sub-boss is probably the toughest of the bunch. Equip your front character with the Spring Orb (which nullifies water attacks), and also some Steel Armor (which offers resistance to Sonic Attacks). Just go all-out and use your best and most powerful attacks.

❷ After defeating the Water Lord, follow this pattern (per screen) to get to the next sub-boss: right, right, left, left, up to the left, right, right, right, and right. We recommend that you fight this guy, just as long as you suit up your reserve character before doing so. Quicksave often!

Boss: Beast Lord
HP: >20,000
Strategy: This is the first of the "optional" sub-bosses, and honestly, this is one of the bosses that you can avoid altogether (unless you have the statistics/items to defeat him).

❸ After defeating the Beast Lord, follow this pattern (per screen) to get to the next sub-boss: left, and then up and to the right.

Boss: Tone Lord
HP: >20,000
Strategy: Since you can try to use one of your reserve characters, the Tone Lord might be worth a shot. Make sure to equip your character with protection from Sonic attacks.

❹ After defeating him, go one screen to the left to reach the next sub-boss.

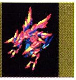
Boss: Stone Lord
HP: >30,000
Strategy: The strongest of the optional sub-bosses (HP-wise), the Stone Lord needs to be beaten in a Duel Battle. Switch out Gustaf with your primary reserve character for this fight.

❺ After defeating the Beast Lord, follow this pattern (per screen) to get to the next sub-boss: down and to the right, then down and to the left.

Boss: Wood Lord
HP: >25,000
Strategy: This boss is actually quite easy if you have some protection against Tree damage (or in the case of Ginny, a specialty in Tree Magic). Try switching out one of your primary characters for this battle.

❻ After defeating the Wood Lord, go one screen to the left and meet up with the final sub-boss (or if you like, just ignore him and go one screen down).

Boss: Fire Lord
HP: >25,000
Strategy: The final sub-boss is also the only one that makes your entire party enter battle. Because of this, we recommend you that skip him and engage the final boss instead.



❼ With the last of the sub-bosses eradicated (or skipped), it's time to head right two screens and square off with the final boss.

Boss: Egg
HP: Depends on which sub-bosses were defeated (>50,000)
Strategy: The final form of the Egg depends on which of the preceding sub-bosses you've destroyed. If you killed all six of them, you'll only have to fight one form before squaring off against the Egg itself. If you decided to kill only one sub-boss, you'll have to fight the remaining five forms as part of the Egg. Above all, make sure to do a Quicksave right before fighting this guy. Use an Ark Stone, then use Soul Crystals on those characters that are low on LP (before the battle). Defeat the Egg to complete the game. Then, you'll get a chance to save your file and restart from the beginning to play Gustave's scenario. Good luck!

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We've come a long way since Pong created the digital playground, haven't we? On ZDNet, you'll find the biggest playground on the Web: GameSpot. It's got everything your gaming heart desires: PlayStation, N64, PC or Dreamcast. Maybe that's why the Academy of Interactive Arts named it "Entertainment Site of the Year." Or maybe it was the pictures of the real-life Lara Croft. Whatever game-thing you're into, ZDNet's GameSpot has something for you. Because ZDNet is where technology takes you.℠

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Tricks of the Trade

Our support resource for cheaters

Archive Tricks

Bass Landing

Lake Configuration Tips

Check out the Free Fishing Mode on your next Bass Landing outing and experiment with the Lake Configuration settings. Here are some suggestions as to how to configure the lake conditions for that optimal fishing experience. Now you can hook your limit! You can always try a variety of settings, but this should help.

Lake: Lunker Lake
Pressure: None
Season: 4 Mid—6 Mid (April-June) or 8 Mid—10 Mid (Aug.-Oct.)
Weather Yesterday: Cloudy/Sunny
Weather Today: Cloudy/Sunny
Wind Direction: East
Wind Speed: 0.0 to 1.0
Water Temp: 60° - 70°
Water Quality: Clear
Start Time: 6:00 - 8:00 or 15:30 - 17:30
Time Elapsed: None
Best Lures: Spinnerbait and Popper
Hint: Fish like to hide in and around vegetation.

Legacy of Kain: Soul Reaver

Tons of Codes

All of these codes are entered while the game is paused during play.

Refill Health
Hold L1 and press Down, Circle, Up, Left, Up, Left.

Next Level Health
Hold L1 and press Right, X, Left, Triangle, Up, Down.

Maximum Health
Hold L1 and press Right, Circle, Down, Up, Down, Up.

Refill Magic
Hold L1 and press Right, Right, Left, Triangle, Right, Down.

Maximum Magic
Hold L1 and press Triangle, Right, Down, Right, Up, Triangle, Left.

Pass Through Barriers
Hold L1 and press Down, Circle(2), Left, Right, Triangle, Up.

Wall Climbing
Hold L1 and press Triangle, Down, L2, Right, Up, Down.

Hurt Raziel
Hold L1 and press Left, Circle, Up(2), Down.

Force
Hold L1 and press Left, Right, Circle, Left, Right, Left.

Constrict
Hold L1 and press Down, Up, Right(2), Circle, Up(2), Down.

Force Glyph
Hold L1 and press Down, Left, Triangle, Down, Up.

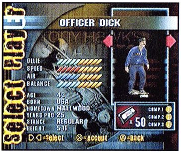
Stone Glyph
Hold L1 and press Down, Circle, Up, Left, Down, Right(2).

Sound Glyph
Hold L1 and press Right(2), Down, Circle, Up(2), Down.

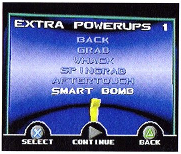
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater

Blowout Trick

This trick will blow open the game, plus give you a new character. From the Menu, access Career Mode. Begin a new game, press Start to pause. Press and hold the R1 button and enter Circle, Right, Up, Down, Circle, Right, Up, Square, Triangle. The screen shakes if entered correctly. Go to the Main Menu Screen. Choose to continue the career mode, and Officer Dick will be available, plus all tapes, levels, medals, stats and FMV movies.


Select Player
OFFICER DICK
OLLIE
SPEED
AIR
BALANCE
AGE 43
BORN USA
HOMETOWN HALLWOOD
YEARS PRO 25
STANCE REGULAR
HEIGHT 5'11
x 50
COMP.1
COMP.2
COMP.3
Select
Accept
Back

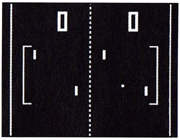
Select Board
3 COURSE MEAL
OLLIE
SPEED
AIR
BALANCE
TURNING
COLOR
MEDIUM
Select
Next Equ.
Accept
Back


EXTRA POWERUPS 1
BACK
GRAB
WHACK
SPINGRAB
AFTERTOUCH
SMART BOMB
SELECT
CONTINUE
BACK

Pong

Open Zones, Levels, Etc.

As soon as you see the "Zone 1" screen, press the Start button to pause. Now press L1, R1, L1, R1. Press Start again. Now choose any Zone in the game. This also opens up each stage and the second "level type." Go back to the Zone Selection Screen and press Start. This time press L2, R2, L2, R2. Press Start again. You now have access to the third "level type" and under the pause menu, a new option called, "Secrets" will be available. You can choose power-ups, pong size, etc. Check out all the classic Pong games in Zone 8!



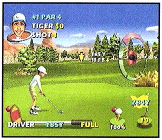
CyberTiger

Unlock Courses

From the Course Select Screen, press the Circle button and enter one of these codes to open up new courses:

Cyber Badlands Course – HARESO is the password.
Cyber Canyons Course – NAMOPI is the password.
Cyber Sawgrass Course – SECARE is the password.
Cyber Summerlin Course – PORASO is the password.

Now you have your choice of courses!


#1 PAR 4
TIGER $0
SHOT 1
DRIVER
FULL
100%

Tomorrow Never Dies

Awesome Tricks

While playing, press Start to pause. Enter the following codes for the results as shown.

Immunity From Bullets
Select, Select, Circle, Circle, Triangle, Select.

Pass Through Walls
Select, Select, Circle, Circle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle, Triangle.

Every Weapon and 50 Health
Select, Select, Circle, Circle, L1, L1, R1, R1.

Mission Complete
Select, Select, Circle, Circle, Select, Circle.

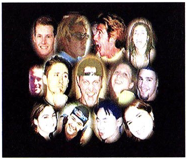
Medal of Honor

Many More Codes

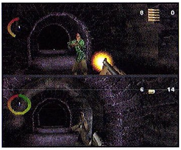
From the Options Screen, choose "Password" then enter any of these codes into the Enigma Machine:

(These codes are unlocked in the Gallery Screen.)

Unlock the Making of Level 1 (history)
Put in INVASION as your code.
Unlock the Making of Level 2 (history)
Put in BIGGRETA as your code.
Unlock the Making of Level 3 (history)
Put in DASBOOT as your code.
Unlock the Making of Level 4 (history)
Put in STUKA as your code.
Unlock the Making of Level 5 (history)
Put in KOMET as your code.
Unlock the Making of Level 6 and 7 (history)
Put in TWOSIXTWO as your code.
Unlock the Making of Level 8 (history)
Put in VICTORYDAY as your code.
Pictures of the Development Team
Put in DWIMOHTEAM as your code.
Secret Photo Gallery of Staff
Put in DWIGALLERY as your code.

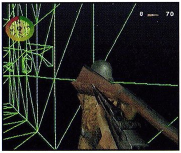


L. Henson Picture
Put in COOLCHICK as your code.
A. Jones Picture
Put in AJRULES as your code.



(These codes work in Multiplayer Mode.)
Unlock Wolfgang
Put in HOODUP as your code.
Unlock Bismarck
Put in WOOFWOOF as your code.
Unlock Otto
Put in HERRZOMBIE as your code.
Unlock Noah
Put in BEACHBALL as your code.
Unlock Von Braun
Put in ROCKETMAN as your code.

(For the next two codes, load a saved game, enter the password, then highlight Mission Log and go to any previous stages.)
Audie Murphy Mode (Invincibility)
Enter MOSTMEDALS, turn this option on at Secret Codes Screen.
Wire Frames
Enter TRACERON as your code. Turn this option on in the Secret Codes Screen.



Crash Team Racing

Unlock New Racers

At Main Menu Screen (with Adventure, Time Trial, etc.), press and hold L1+R1 and enter one of these codes (works in any mode except Adventure):

Ripper Roo
Right, Circle, Circle, Down, Up, Down, Right.

SELECT CHARACTER
RIPPER ROO

N. Tropy
Down, Left, Right, Up, Down, Right, Right.

TIME
0:24:28
x7
LAP
1/3
4TH

Do you have a trick that you, and only you, know? Don't hold back—write us at:

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine
P.O. Box 3338
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3338

Sorry, we cannot respond to individual letters asking for codes or tricks.

Archive Tricks

Water Glyph
Hold L1 and press Down, Circle, Up, Down, Right.
Sunlight Glyph
Hold L1 and press Left, Circle, Left, Right, Right, Up(2), Left.
Fire Glyph
Hold L1 and press Up(2), Right, Up, Triangle, L2, Right.
Shift at Any Time
Hold L1 and press Up(2), Down, Right(2), Left, Circle, Right, Left, Down.

Star Wars: Episode 1 The Phantom Menace

Droid Test Debug

At the Main Menu, highlight Options, but do not select it. Press Triangle, Circle, Left, L1, R2, Square, Circle, Left. If you entered the code correctly, you will hear a beep. Then, hold L1 + Select + Triangle to access a droid test debug menu with level select, FMV sequence, sound test and invincibility options. To start on a new selected level, exit the Cheat Menu and start a new game. The game will begin on the level selected. To watch the FMV sequences or hear the game sounds, highlight the desired clip and press X. Hold L1 + Select + Triangle to return to the menu at any time.

V-Rally Edition '99

Cheat Mode

At the Press Start Screen, press L + R, C-Left, C-Right, L + R. Press Start, then at the Mode Selection Screen, hold Z and tap L until "Cheat mode" appears at the bottom of the screen. Cheat mode includes special modes and the option to unlock bonus cars.

Xena Warrior Princess

Multiple Codes

Invincibility: At the Main Menu, press Up, Up, Up, Circle, Square, Up, Right, Left. If you entered the code correctly, you will hear a sound.
Full Shield and Attack: At the Main Menu, press Triangle, Square, Triangle, Square, Square, Up, Up, Up. If you entered the code correctly, you will hear a sound.

Wu-Tang: Shaolin Style

Chamber Secrets

Rza Chamber Specific Secrets
Task needed to gain secret — Secret Description
Gain chambers 1-5 — Gain character's kill number 2
Gain chambers 6-10 — Scale mode
Gain chambers 11-15 — Gain character's kill number 3
Gain chambers 16-17 — Gain Mudan Kill number 3
Gain chambers 18-20 — Gain character's secret outfit
Gza Chamber Specific Secrets
Task needed to gain secret — Secret Description
Gain chambers 1-5 — Gain character's kill number 2
Gain chambers 6-10 — Gain character's rival playable
Gain chambers 11-15 — Gain character's kill number 3
Gain chambers 16-17 — Character art for GZA and rival
Gain chambers 18-20 — Super Turbo mode
Ol' Dirty Bastard Chamber Specific Secrets
Task needed to gain secret — Secret Description
Gain chambers 1-5 — Gain character's kill number 2
Gain chambers 6-10 — Gain character's secret outfit
Gain chambers 11-15 — Gain character's kill number 3

(cont. on page 112)

Archive Tricks

(cont. from page 111)

Gain chambers 16-17 — Gain rival's kill number 2
Gain chambers 18-20 — Gain rival's kill number 3

Inspecta Deck Chamber Specific Secrets

Task needed to gain secret — Secret Description
Gain chambers 1-5 — Gain character's kill number 2
Gain chambers 6-10 — Disco lighting mode
Gain chambers 11-15 — Gain character's kill number 3
Gain chambers 16-17 — Character art for Inspecta Deck and rival
Gain chambers 18-20 — Gain character's rival playable

Raekwon The Chef Chamber Specific Secrets

Task needed to gain secret — Secret Description
Gain chambers 1-5 — Gain character's kill number 2
Gain chambers 6-10 — Character art for Raekwon and rival
Gain chambers 11-15 — Gain character's kill number 3
Gain chambers 16-17 — Gain character's rival playable
Gain chambers 18-20 — Gain character's secret outfit

Masta Killah Chamber Specific Secrets

Task needed to gain secret — Secret Description
Gain chambers 1-5 — Night fighting mode
Gain chambers 6-10 — Gain character's kill number 2
Gain chambers 11-15 — Gain character's kill number 3
Gain chambers 16-17 — Gain Lei-Gong Kill number 3
Gain chambers 18-20 — Gain character's rival playable

Ghostface Killah Chamber Specific Secrets

Task needed to gain secret — Secret Description
Gain chambers 1-5 — Gain practice dummy – Bodyguard
Gain chambers 6-10 — Gain character's kill number 2
Gain chambers 11-15 — Gain character's kill number 3
Gain chambers 16-17 — Gain character's secret outfit
Gain chambers 18-20 — Gain Arena 4.1

U-God Chamber Specific Secrets

Task needed to gain secret — Secret Description
Gain chambers 1-5 — Merry go Round mode
Gain chambers 6-10 — Gain character's kill number 2
Gain chambers 11-15 — Gain character's kill number 3
Gain chambers 16-17 — Gain Arena 3.1
Gain chambers 18-20 — Gain character's secret outfit

Method Man Chamber Specific Secrets

Task needed to gain secret — Secret Description
Gain chambers 1-5 — Gain Arena 1.1
Gain chambers 6-10 — Gain character's kill number 2
Gain chambers 11-15 — Gain character's kill number 3
Gain chambers 16-17 — Character art for Method and rival
Gain chambers 18-20 — Gain character's secret outfit

Practice Arena

Complete Practice Mode with all 21 characters to unlock the Practice Arena. To access this arena in Versus Mode, highlight any arena, then hold L1 and L2 buttons and confirm your selection by pressing the X button.

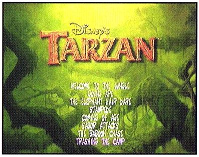
Tarzan

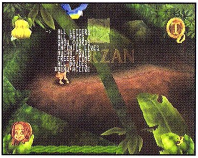
Level Select and Cheat Menu

On the Main Menu Screen, quickly put in these button combinations for the following tricks:

Level Select:
Left, Left, Right, Right, Up, Down, Left, Right, Up, Up, Down, Down. Now move down past the "Load Game" option and the word, "Cheats" will appear. Access this option to have access to the game levels. Press Right to get the bonus levels.

In-Game Cheat Menu:
After entering the "Cheats" on the Main Menu Screen, press L1, R1, L1, R1, L1, R1, L1, R1, L2, R2. Then pick a level and enter it. Now press Start to pause. The "Cheat Menu" will appear at the bottom of the screen. Access this option to get access to all letters, mucho fruit, infinite lives, etc.





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PlayStation

You have the POWER. In this contest you don't rely on the luck-of-the draw. You determine if you win or not. You win by outscoring others in a game of skill. Can you solve the puzzle below? It looks simple, but it's only the start. Each of five more puzzles will get harder. But this time it's all up to you. Stay in to the end with the highest score and the gear is yours. With whatever options you want. Do you have what it takes? Then play to win!

Computer Contest. Win a blazing fast computer with 500 Mhz MMX Pentium II, 128 meg. RAM, 14 Gig. HD, DVD, Windows 98, modem and more!

Video Game Contest. Play on the hi-tech cutting edge with this line-up: Sony Playstation w/ ASCII control pads; Sega Dreamcast!; Game Boy Pocket; and Nintendo 64! Get all four or trade the ones you don't want for CASH! Bonus options include: 33" monitor, $1,000 in games you choose, cash, accessories and more!

Media Rig Contest. The Ultimate Gaming Environment, 60 inch monitor, 130 watt receiver w/ Dolby Digital Surround, DVD and all components shown. Win DSS Satellite Receiver as a BONUS OPTION! This rig will blow you away!!

We're talkin' GAMING HEAVEN!

Directions. Fill in the Mystery Word Grid with words going across that spell out the Mystery Word down the side. Hint: use the Mystery Word Clue.

In the future. For each contest there will be four more puzzles at $2.00 each and one much tougher final at $1.00 which will be sent to you by mail. You will have 3 weeks to solve each puzzle. We don't know how many will play but typically 55% will have the highest score possible score to Phase I, 43% to Phase II, 36% to Phase III, and 32% to Phase IV. Highest score in the final determines the winner. If players are still tied they will split the value of the grand prize they are playing for.

Mystery Word Grid

	H				___
		E			___
P	I	N	C	H	W
	R				___
S					___

MYSTERY WORD

WORD LIST and LETTER CODE chart

PINCH .....W
BREAK ......Z
STOMP .....T
CRUSH.......I

PRESS.......K
PUNCH .....S
STAND......R
SCORE .....H

BLAST ......A
SPRAY C
PRESS.......E
SLANT L

WRECK .....D
TURBO......V
DREAM....O
CHASE......P

MYSTERY WORD CLUE:
WORLD RULERS HAVE IT AND IN THIS CONTEST YOU HAVE IT

Yes! ENTER ME TODAY, HERE'S MY ENTRY FEE:

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☐ ($3.00) Media Rig Contest
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Verifiable retail value of the prize packages as follows: Media Rig Contest package $7,012.00 core components shown, bonus options $3,449.00, cash options $1,250.00. Computer Contest package $2,500.00 for computer, bonus options $2,337.00, cash options $1,250.00. Video Game Contest $1,000.00 for systems shown, $3,549.00 bonus options, $1,250.00 cash options.

gadgets, electronics, arts and recreation

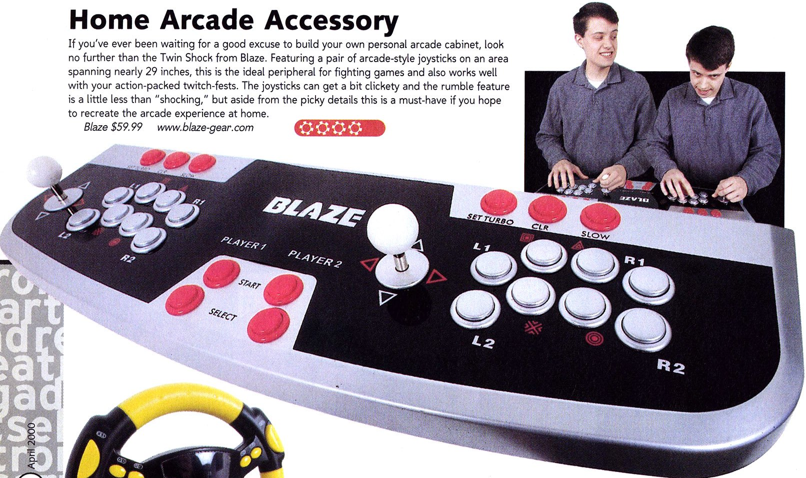
by Chris Baker
chris_m_baker@zd.com

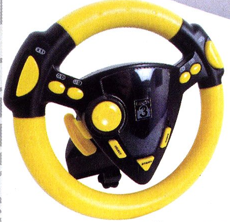
⚙⚙⚙⚙⚙ 5G No question, this should be in your home
⚙⚙⚙⚙ 4G Recommended, very cool
⚙⚙⚙ 3G Pretty good, check it out
⚙⚙ 2G Below average
⚙ 1G Very lame

Home Arcade Accessory

If you've ever been waiting for a good excuse to build your own personal arcade cabinet, look no further than the Twin Shock from Blaze. Featuring a pair of arcade-style joysticks on an area spanning nearly 29 inches, this is the ideal peripheral for fighting games and also works well with your action-packed twitch-fests. The joysticks can get a bit clickety and the rumble feature is a little less than "shocking," but aside from the picky details this is a must-have if you hope to recreate the arcade experience at home.

Blaze $59.99 www.blaze-gear.com ⚙⚙⚙⚙





Yep, Another Wheel

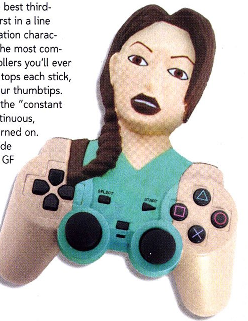
Logic3's GTO offers plenty of laudable features for the money—Namco JogCon compatibility, good control, even a nice rumble when called for. But unfortunately, you ultimately get what you paid for. While it remains very stable when clamped onto a desk, the question must be asked: Who plays their PlayStation at a desk? Also working against the GTO, X is placed on the left with Square on the right—not entirely "logical." X's placement on the wheel also causes the base of your thumb to ache after 30 minutes or so, a weirdly unpleasant feeling. For another 10 bucks you can pick up the advanced model, the Sprinter (unavailable for review), which features foot pedals and a laptop design that might alleviate the GTO's problems. But just remember…we said "might."

Logic3 $29.99 www.logic3.com ⚙⚙◖

Croft Controller

It may look strange, but AFD Entertainment's Handheld Heroine is undoubtedly the best third-party controller on the market. The first in a line modeled after popular female PlayStation characters, this Lara Croft version features the most comfortable and responsive analog controllers you'll ever grasp. The secret? A mass of silicone tops each stick, providing a formfitting cushion for your thumbtips. However, we are a bit puzzled about the "constant shock" feature, which activates a continuous, adjustable rumble effect whenever turned on. AFD's future Handheld Heroines include Dino Crisis' Regina, Final Fantasy VIII GF Shiva and Fear Effect's Hana Tsu-Vachel (available in both hooker disguise and towel). If only all women were this easy to handle!

AFD Entertainment $30.01 ⚙⚙⚙⚙⚙



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OPMAPR00

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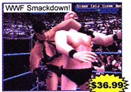
WWF Smackdown!



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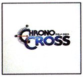

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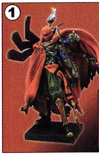

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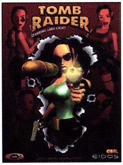

From the ancient ruins of South America to the sprawling Great Wall of China, Lara Croft has traveled the world. Bring her into your world with this beautifully designed wallscroll from Game Cave

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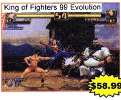

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Colony Wars: Red Sun

Players	1	**Developer**	Psygnosis
Availability	March	**Publisher**	Psygnosis
Analog Compatible	Yes	**Genre**	Action

×	**Fire Primary Weapon**
○	**Cycle Secondary Weapons**
□	**Cycle Primary Weapons**
△	**Toggle Target**
L1	**Reverse**
L2	**Roll Left**
R1	**Thrust**
R2	**Roll Right**

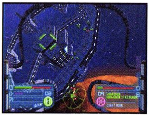
COLONY WARS RED SUN
Logon
Options
Confirm

Keep cool I'm on your side

What is it?

The third title in the space-shooting Colony Wars series, Red Sun doesn't force you to ally with the Navy or the League of Free Planets; this time, you're on your own. You play as Valdemar, an adventuring free agent modeled after the suave and smarmy Han Solo. Depending on your choice of missions, you could end up on either side of the struggle.

Preparing to leave area
LASER
LEAGUE INTERCEPTOR
LIGHT MINE



What to expect in the full game:

Fifty different space and planet missions across five new solar systems; more than 20 minutes of FMV sequences; nine ships customizable with 30 weapons and add-ons; multiple endings; training missions; improved AI; the option to save after every mission; nebulae and other environmental effects; majestic, live orchestral soundtrack; beautiful textures that really, truly push the PlayStation to its limits.

Our advice:

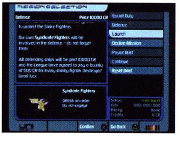
While the demo offers you the ability to upgrade your ship with new parts, there's nothing compelling enough for you to purchase that makes it worth selling your stun missiles to raise cash. Be sure to choose the planetside "Escort Duty" mission first—the space-based "Defense" mission is much more challenging. While on escort, stick as close to your convoy as possible, watching out for insidious pirate tanks that may sneak below your field of vision. Don't be afraid to fire your stun missiles after targeting foes—they'll be immobilized for a crucial five seconds or so, giving you just enough time to introduce enemy ships to Mr. Laser Cannon.

Your dogfighting skills will be put to the test in the second mission. Make sure to master the use of rolls, reverse, and forward afterburners when enemies fly by at close range. Target the space station and look at the life meter on the right-hand side of the screen to keep a close eye on its condition. Don't worry about staying too close to the station, and, again, abuse your two-stage rockets mercilessly. Clear out the baddies as quickly as possible, but don't lose heart if it takes more than five attempts before victory reigns.

OPM psychic sez:

Psygnosis has listened to complaints from gamers who have been frustrated by the near-impossible level of challenge in previous titles and adjusted the learning curve accordingly. Add to that numerous features that build on the series' addictive gameplay and Psygnosis has a promising sequel on their hands. Take a look at our review on page 93 of this issue for the verdict.

I don't like these odds, I'm pulling out


MISSION SELECTION
Defence
Price 10000 CR
Escort Duty
Defence
Launch
Decline Mission
Pause Brief
Continue
Reset Brief
Syndicate Fighters
Status
Free agent
Kills
000/000/000
Rating
None
Credits
0 CR
Confirm
Go Back

To protect the Strike Fighters.

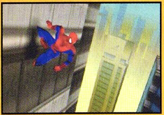
Our own Syndicate Fighters will be involved in the defence - do not forget them.

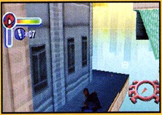
All defending ships will be paid 10000 CR and the League have agreed to pay a bounty of 500 CR for every enemy fighter destroyed. Good luck.

Spider-Man

Players	**1**	**Developer**	**Neversoft**
Availability	**Summer**	**Publisher**	**Activision**
Analog Compatible	**Yes**	**Genre**	**Action**

✕	**Jump**
○	**Kick**
□	**Punch**
△	**Trap Web**
L1	**Look Around Mode**
L2	**Not Used**
R1	**Web Zip Line**
R2	**Swing Web**

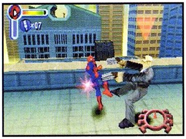




Of course it wouldn't be a Spider-Man game without the ability to crawl along walls and hang upside down from buildings.

What is it?

A man in a red and blue skin-tight suit who swings around skyscrapers fighting crime. No, not Mark MacDonald; it's Spider-Man! Neversoft is reusing the graphical engine from the smash hit Tony Hawk Pro Skater to develop a title based around Marvel's web-slinging comic superhero.

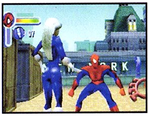


What to expect in the full game:

Faithful reproduction of Spidey's comic book moves; a free-roaming 3D world with skylines, subway tunnels and buildings to explore; villain appearances such as Scorpion, Venom, Carnage, Doctor Octopus and the Lizard; a variety of combo attacks.

Our advice:

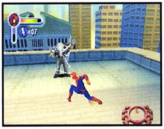
The demo gives you a fantastic chance to experience nearly all of Spider-Man's trademark moves for yourself—so try them! Swinging from building to building is about as much fun as you can have without being bitten by a radioactive spider. Enter the first-person mode with the L1 button and target your destination—if the target is green, tap R2 and you'll automatically shoot out a web and swing away. This technique even works when you're hanging upside-down. Or, if you're feeling particularly courageous, take a leap of faith and hit R2 at the peak of your jump.

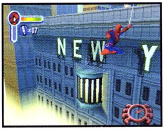


When confronting henchmen, try to keep out of sight and sneak up from behind them. Resist the urge to simply immobilize them with webs—it works, but it's not nearly as satisfying as forming web spikes (Left + Triangle) and going in for some hand-to-hand combat. Then, just follow the compass and you'll reach the bank before long.

Did you try?

Pulling a henchman off a building with your web? Ol' Spidey was never this cruel.





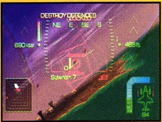
OPM psychic sez:

The demo may be short and a tad buggy, but it seems that Neversoft has all the critical elements in place for a smash hit. Could this be the first decent Spider-Man title to hit consoles? We're remaining cautiously psyched about this one.

Eagle One: Harrier Attack

Players	**1-2**	**Developer**	**Glass Ghost**
Availability	**Now**	**Publisher**	**Infogrames**
Analog Compatible	**Yes**	**Genre**	**Action**

✕	**Fire**
○	**Select Weapons**
□	**Throttle Down**
△	**Throttle Up**
L1	**Change Camera**
L2	**Rudder Left**
R1	**Hover / Jet Mode**
R2	**Rudder Right**



What is it?

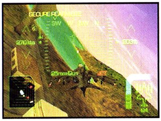
Let's face it. No matter how many Pepsi points you collect, Pepsico and the U.S. government aren't likely to hand over a Harrier jet into your sweaty hands. But you'll be well-off settling for Glass Ghost and Infogrames' Eagle One: Harrier Attack.

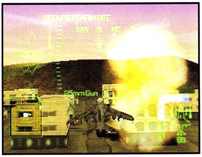
What to expect in the full game:

Two-player co-operative and competitive missions; 25 varied single-player missions with multiple aircraft; CNN-like news reports between missions; tons of atmospheric effects; 10-second replay feature.

Our advice:

You're not flying a VTOL (Vertical Takeoff and Landing) jet for nothing—be sure to enter hover mode and strafe enemy units as you secure the landing site. Same goes for the bridge—pop up behind the nearby hills, fire off a few vulture missiles, then sink out of sight again. It's like playing peek-a-boo, only deadlier.





Did you try:

Shutting off the flight model options? It's the only way to perform certain stunts that'll unlock special bonuses in the full game.

OPM psychic sez:

If Eagle One delivers on its promise of a huge variety of missions, Namco's Ace Combat series could have a serious competitor on its hands.

Hot Shots Golf 2

Players	1-4	**Developer**	Sony CEA
Availability	Now	**Publisher**	Sony CEA
Analog Compatible	Yes	**Genre**	Sports

✕	**Starts Swing / Selects Power**
○	**Moves Camera Backwards**
□	**Switches to Power**
△	**Moves Camera Forward**
L1	**Select Club**
L2	**Toggle cross-section view**
R1	**Select Club**
R2	**Return Camera to Default**

From Mel's toupee-stomping outbursts to Chip' impromptu guitar licks, Hot Shots' characters have plenty of exaggerated, amusing behaviors.

What is it?

Golf simulations had long remained one of the more niche markets in the videogame industry—that is, until Hot Shots Golf came around. With a generous learning curve and simple play mechanics, Hot Shots Golf appealed to the masses, yet retained enough depth to please even the most hardcore golf fan. And since runaway success will invariably lead to a sequel, Hot Shots Golf 2 is now on the way.

SELECT CHARACTERS
Mel
Chip
STANDARD
STANDARD

What to expect in the full game:

Improved course scenery and graphics; smaller character heads; tons of secret golfers (including Crash Bandicoot and Spyro the Dragon); old and new play modes; more encouraging sound bites after great shots; large variety of courses; more detailed character animation; tutorials for beginners and seasoned golfers alike looking to hone their skills.

Our advice:

It goes without saying that newcomers to Hot Shots should take advantage of the famously gentle learning curve and select the "Easy Shot" mode. Be sure to select Mel as well rather than Chip—superior control and impact stats will make your first virtual round of golf an enjoyable one.

After you've played a few rounds and can reach par comfortably, give the "Normal Shot" mode a try. You'll need more precision on your swing to ensure you don't end up with a big ol' mound of topsoil laying about afterwards.

Finally, once you're really comfortable with the game's controls, give Chip a try. He may not have much control, but his high power stat will definitely give him the furthest distance on the tee-off.

OPM psychic sez:

While Hot Shots Golf 2 has built on the immensely successful Hot Shots with some interesting feature additions and engine polishing, it's not quite as much fun as the original. It's still one of the best golf titles, though.

Rollcage Stage II

Players	1-2	**Developer**	Attn. to Detail
Availability	Now	**Publisher**	Psygnosis
Analog Compatible	Yes	**Genre**	Racing

✕	**Accelerate**
○	**Auto Correct**
□	**Brake**
△	**Reverse**
L1	**Fire Weapon I**
L2	**Zoom In**
R1	**Fire Weapon 2**
R2	**Zoom Out**

Thanks to bizarre laws of physics, toppling over an edge doesn't always mean certain death.

What is it?

The followup sequel to Psygnosis' futuristic, pulse-pounding, electronica-filled racing title. (You know, the one with the four-wheeled racers that stuck to walls and ceilings like glue. What other game were you thinking of?)

LAP 2/2
1st
320

What to expect in the full game:

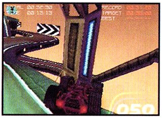
Over 60 tracks; fewer "spin-out" situations; over 50 cars; five leagues; Over 14 different game modes, such as Scramble, Destruction, Survivor, Pursuit, Tournament, Knockout, Training, Stunt, and a beast known as "Rubble Soccer;" a licensed soundtrack chock-full with big-name artists; a super-weapon powerup created by merging together all existing weapons.

Our advice:

While developer Attention to Detail has employed a new "Stock-o-Cam" to ensure the camera always faces the direction you're racing, it's still possible to lose your orientation after a particularly nasty ceiling flip in the Arcade Mode. Try to keep a sense of which end of your car faces forward, or hit the circle button to auto-correct your vehicle. If you pick up a missile, hold up on the D-Pad to target a racer up ahead, then fire away! And don't forget to start accelerating when the countdown hits "1" for an extra boost.

On the second Scramble track, holding the accelerator to the floor will be a one-way ticket off the track into a pit of nothingness; the brake is there for a reason too! Some of the turns and jumps will require extreme perseverance and skill—try creeping through the level first before attempting to break any time records.

LAP 2/2
3rd
333



OPM psychic sez:

Rollcage fans will definitely find a lot to gush about in this worthy sequel, but check out our review on page 95 to see our verdict.

Gekido

Players	1-4	Developer	Infogrames
Availability	May	Publisher	Interplay
Analog Compatible	Yes	Genre	Fighting

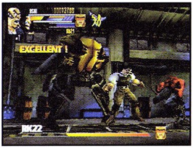
✕	Kick
○	Rage
□	Light Punch
△	Heavy Punch
L1	Jump
L2	Crouch / Pick Up Objects
R1	Not Used
R2	Lock Mode

What is it?

Gekido comes inspired by the classic side-scrolling fighters of yore such as Double Dragon and Streets of Rage. But unlike previous attempts to bring the genre to the PlayStation (see Batman Forever, Fighting Force), Gekido doesn't suck away your desire to live.

What to expect in the full game:

Five different fighting modes, including Street Battle, Adventure Mode, and the four-player Arena Battle; interactive 3D environments; nine unique characters; 17 levels; over 100 combos and weapons; multiple story / level paths; cut scenes between levels.



Our advice:

First-time players will want to pick Ushi— he's slow, but can deliver the bone-crushing hits to knock foes down quickly. It's vital that you pick up weapons and objects as they appear, especially sub-machine guns and power-ups. Try using the combo grab (Square + Triangle) instead of a regular grab—you can kill two birds with one stone by throwing your target into an oncoming attacker.

OPM psychic sez:

It's been a long time since we've had a decent side-scrolling, button-mashing, arcade-style classic like Gekido. If the four-player Arena Battle holds up as well as the demo's single-player mode, Gekido should be a huge hit at parties, too.

Galerians

Players	1	Developer	ASCII
Availability	Now	Publisher	Crave Ent
Analog Controller	Yes	Genre	Adventure

What is it?

Crave's "psychological thriller." Crave promises a terrifying, three-disc cinematic experience lasting 50 hours and containing 70 minutes of FMV sequences.

Why should I care?

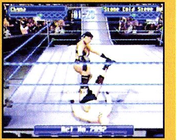
Galerians seems like it may actually stand out in the crowd of Resident Evil clones. Galerians is the story of Rion, an amnesiac 14-year-old boy who slowly discovers his latent psychic powers. After being pumped full of chemicals and subjected to experiment after experiment, Rion decides he's had enough—and starts using his powers to kill the "Galerians." Expect lots of blood.

OPM video critic sez:

TET-SU-OOOOO!!! Erm, getting back on track, not since Dan Quayle's infamous speech at the United Negro College Fund have we seen a movie's ending quote used so effectively. Let's hope the game is as compelling as the movie. Tentative thumbs up.

WWF Smackdown

Players	1-4	Developer	Yukes
Availability	Now	Publisher	THQ
Analog Controller	Yes	Genre	Wrestling



What is it?

Any wrestling fan worth his or her candy ass is already intimately familiar with THQ's WWF Smackdown. Heralded as possibly the best wrestler to date on any platform, Smackdown has a mind-boggling number of tantalizing features and presents the most lifelike wrestling experience to date. Plus, you'll be able to extend the "drama" backstage like never before—and take the pain and violence to a whole new level.

Why should I care?

Well, if you're a wrestling fan, and you're reading this magazine, chances are you're interested in seeing a high-quality, blockbuster wrestling title appear on the PlayStation.

OPM video critic sez:

The video is fast-paced, intense, and doesn't last nearly long enough—just like the sport it depicts. Thumbs way, way up.

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Next Month

A look ahead at our next issue

Official U.S. PlayStation Magazine

May 2000

On sale April 11

PlayStation2. Yep, by next month's issue, we'll have the Japanese system in our eager hands—and we'll be bringing you the biggest, most comprehensive coverage ever of Sony's new supersytem, complete with hands-on previews of all the games that will revolutionize the way you look at your TV. Plus we'll have all the latest PlayStation reviews—including Alundra 2, Galerians and Gauntlet Legends—as well as plenty of previews, the hottest tricks, exclusive news and detailed strategies. And don't forget our demo disc, packed with hot new playable games like MediEvil 2, Speed Punks and NASCAR Rumble!

Check Out Our Next Demo Disc!

PLAYABLES: MEDIEVIL 2, SPEED PUNKS, NCAA MARCH MADNESS 2000, RUGRATS STUDIO TOUR, NASCAR RUMBLE
NON-PLAYABLES: MLB 2001, VAGRANT STORY, FRONT MISSION, SARGE'S HERO, ROAD RASH JAILBREAK

Editorial content subject to change

ELECTRONIC GAMING MONTHLY™

On sale now

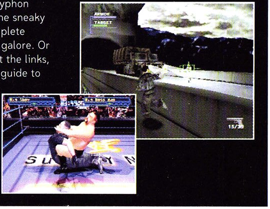
Rare's Perfect Dark is the biggest thing to hit the N64 this year, and some would argue that it's the biggest N64 game ever. *EGM*'s April issue will include every tiny little detail about this mucho-anticipated follow-up to GoldenEye. Will its multiplayer modes top GoldenEye's? Will the game be worth the wait? We turn to Rare for the answers in the issue you've been waiting two years for. Also in the issue:

- Reviews: Hot Shots Golf 2, Syphon Filter 2, Ace Combat 3, Giga Wing and many more!
- News: Chris "Scoop" Johnston brings you the latest from around the world.
- Tons of Tricks for all systems
- Cool NGPC reviews and previews

EXPERT GAMER™

On sale March 21

Who's da man? Gabe's da man, and *XG*'s got him covered. That's right, kiddies, Syphon Filter 2 is here and *XG* won't miss one sneaky step. Tear into the game with a complete walk-through, full maps and secrets galore. Or if spring's got you in the mood to hit the links, be sure to check out *XG*'s complete guide to Hot Shots Golf 2. Also featured are Fear Effect, Galerians, WWF SmackDown!, NASCAR Rumble, Dragon Warrior Monsters and more than 2,000 hot codes and tricks! And oh yeah, did somebody mention previews? Hmm...



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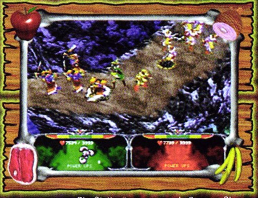

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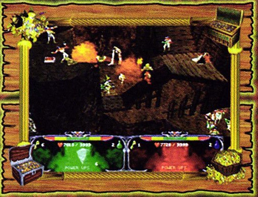

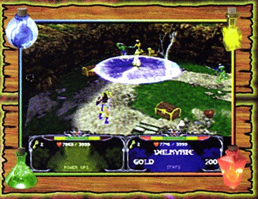

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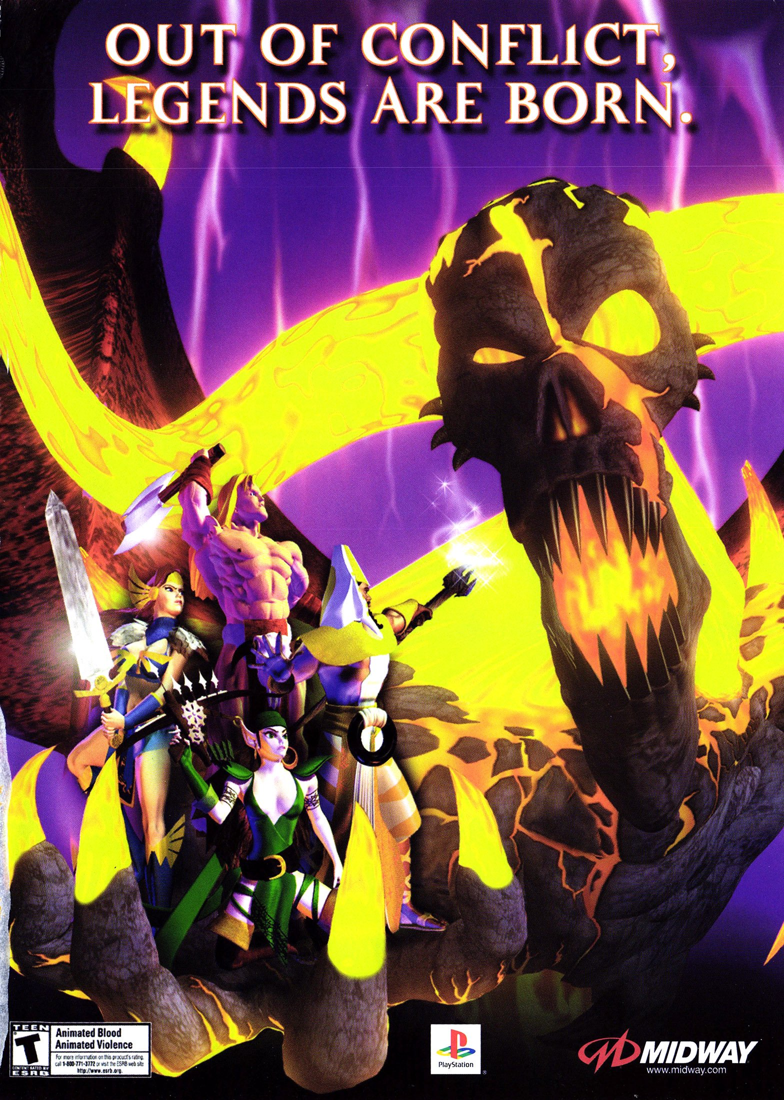
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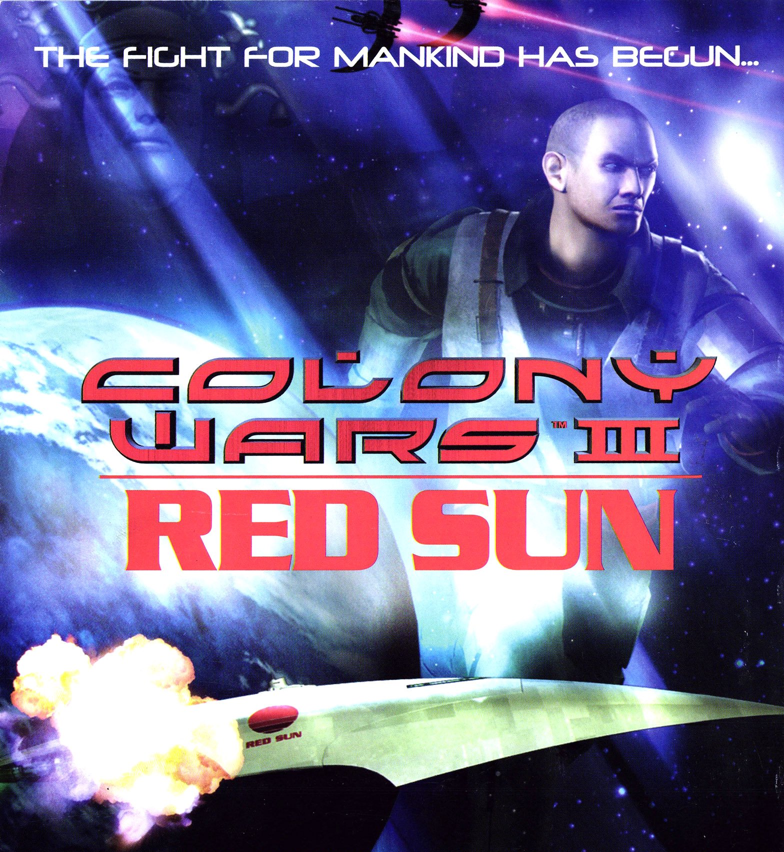

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